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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

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Dublin and the Hollywood connection

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Easy rider

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Fermat's last theorist

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A brush with disaster – 200 miles above Earth

The Russian space station Mir seen from the space shuttle Atlantis, with the Earth in the background and, top left, the British astronaut Michael Foale

David Hearst in Moscow and Tim Radford

BRITISH astronaut Michael Foale (above) and two Russian cosmonauts aboard Mir space station were last night battling to cope with a reduced power supply and a hole of "unknown size" in the side of one of the modules, after a near catastrophic mid-space collision with a runaway supply ship.

Air pressure throughout the space station began to fall after the craft smashed into solar batteries and created the hole. The crew spent several desperate minutes trying to seal the hatch connecting the damaged scientific research module — called Spektr — to the rest of the station, before normal atmospheric pressure could be restored.

Mission control officials revealed last night that the power supply was cut by a third. After speaking with the crew, the director of the Russian mission control centre, Vladimir Lobachyov, said: "The cosmonauts say there is a fall in the electrical supply ... and as a result of the collision a hole [in Spektr] has developed whose size is still unclear."

Mr Lobachyov said it was one of the worst accidents to befall Mir in its 11-year history. Jerry Linenger, the Nasa astronaut who left Mir when Michael Foale boarded her, said: "Decompression and fire are big things you have to worry about, and we've just had both of them."

There was no concealing that a catastrophe had narrowly been averted. The accident will do nothing to avert growing tensions between US Nasa officials and the Russians about the safety of Mir, which the Russians insist can be kept going until 1999.

Viktor Blagov, deputy director of mission control, said: "We have managed to stabilise the situation. There is no talk about evacuating the crew or jettisoning the module."

The crew can abandon Mir at any moment using the Soyuz capsule on permanent standby next to the sealed Spektr hatch.

Michael Foale joined the Russian crew of Vasily Tsibliyev and Alexander Lazutkin a month ago and was scheduled to stay up until September.

The collision happened as the crew were practising a docking manoeuvre with the Progress supply craft. It had been disconnected from its docking port on Tuesday and had been "parked" in space a few metres from the Spektr module when it began to move of its own accord. A spokesman said: "For some reason, it moved without a command; the reasons for this are not clear."

That did not stop experts guessing. One calculation was simple error. In zero-gravity, Newton's laws of motion are unforgiving, and things that once start moving are difficult to stop. Another guess was that the cargo ship had been punctured by space debris. If air had escaped from inside, this would have acted as an extra impulse thrust and changed its trajectory. Either way, the Mir crew were inches from tragedy.

The crew now face the problem of how to repair Spektr, which was added to the complex two years ago. They also have a real problem with the manual guidance system used to conduct the once-routine manoeuvres. They have been trying for months to improve the system, so that it could fully replace the automatic system which has failed repeatedly in recent years.

Viktor Blagov revealed yesterday that the Russians were not happy with the Ukrainian manufactured system — with its quality or terms of delivery.

The cargo ship is likely to be jettisoned, to burn up in the Earth's atmosphere, while Nasa, the Russians and the crew begin to consider the long-term future of a space experiment that has already survived for twice its intended life in orbit — but which is still vital to the planned International Space Station, expected to be in operation by 2002.

In recent months, Mir has been plagued with accidents, including a fire, a failure of the oxygen generating equipment, a malfunction of the system which removes carbon dioxide from the air and a leak of antifreeze. The crew had just finished repairing the cooling system which the latest accident happened.

17 million bits of rubbish in a hurry, page 3

Blair sets Sinn Fein peace deadline

David Sharrock and Michael White

TONY BLAIR warned yesterday that the Government will press ahead with its new timetable for a political settlement in Northern Ireland by next May — even if the IRA refuses to declare a ceasefire and Sinn Fein is excluded from the all-party talks.

However, the Prime Minister used a Commons statement to confirm that he and the outgoing Irish prime minister, John Bruton, have agreed significant concessions to Sinn Fein — endorsed by the incoming Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern — by allowing it to enter the all-party talks after only six weeks of a fresh IRA ceasefire. President Bill Clinton is also on board.

That would mean talks starting in September. Under the "parallel decommissioning" procedure, designed to allow all Northern Ireland's parties to embrace Senator George Mitchell's "six principles", paramilitary weapons would be given up at the start, during and at the end of the negotiations, which now have a deadline for completion — next May.

Although the timetable won the immediate backing of John Hume, leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, David Trimble, the Official Unionist leader, was more guarded, warning that the new mechanisms for disarmament "must actually work".

Unionists remain alarmed at the prospect that Sinn Fein could get into the talks before the new independent commission can properly test the quality of the IRA "unequivocal ceasefire" demanded by Mr Blair. However, Mr Trimble did not slam the door on the timetable.

Mr Blair and the Northern Ireland Secretary, Mo Mowlam, repeatedly stressed that "the settlement train is leaving, with or without Sinn Fein".

Sinn Fein's leader, Gerry Adams, later said the proposals would be given the fullest consideration. But he warned: "I remain deeply concerned that the decommissioning issue will become a block to the negotiation of the substantive issues further down the road."

Despite the ban on meetings between British officials and Sinn Fein since the Lurgan killings 10 days ago, Downing Street officials are not ruling out a meeting if it is needed to clarify any points, though substantive amendment of London and Dublin's joint paper is not on. Irish officials are saying it is the best chance available.

William Hague immediately confirmed that his new Tory leadership team would

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The commitments

To join the negotiations a party would have to commit to

- Democratic and exclusively peaceful means of resolving political issues
- Total disarmament of all paramilitary organisations
- Verification of disarmament by an independent commission
- Renounce, and oppose any effort by others, to use or threaten to use force to influence the negotiations
- Abide by any agreement
- Take effective steps to end punishment killings and beatings.
- An immediate and total end to violence and the earliest possible decommissioning of all paramilitary weapons.

Teachers admit cheating in tests for 11-year-olds

John Carvel and Alex Bellamy

STRICTER rules to stop primary school teachers cheating to help 11-year-olds score higher marks in the national assessment tests are being prepared by the curriculum authority after allegations of widespread malpractice.

In a series of interviews with the Guardian, teachers yesterday confessed to opening sealed question papers delivered to schools at least two weeks before the tests were taken last month, using the contents to coach their pupils to give the right answers in maths and science.

They said their conduct was justified by the need to "protect" socially disadvantaged schools from a low rank in the performance league tables which would unfairly discourage parents.

"If such behaviour is happening on a widespread scale, it amounts to blatant malpractice, breach of contract and thoroughly unprofessional conduct," said a spokeswoman for the the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

The authority checked all complaints of cheating, using sophisticated computer software to expose suspicious answering patterns, but it rarely found any evidence. However, an Essex head teacher was suspended last month pending disciplinary proceedings when the local authority started investigating allegations that he broke instructions forbidding early scrutiny of the test questions.

Teachers who spoke confidentially to the Guardian yesterday said the cheating was widespread. "I estimate that over half the schools in our authority have cheated in one way or another. You can tell the ones that haven't because they're the ones at the bottom of the league tables," said one inner-city deputy head.

"Head teachers don't explicitly tell you to cheat, but since they open the papers and give them to you well before the exam, there must be some implicit expectation that you will," said an inner-London primary teacher.

The cheating took various forms. "I've used parallel coaching, whereby I set the class questions that had almost identical wording and working methods as those in the exam, but using different figures," said the deputy head, suggesting this was by far the most common method.

The teachers also confessed to cheating while the children were sitting the tests. "I've suggested the pupil thinks about the question in a different way when I've been asked for help," said one from the Midlands. "There have been times when I've seen a pupil is stuck and I've just given him or her the answer. I know many others who have done the same," said another from London. She added that she gave her pupils extra time to complete the tests.

The curriculum authority said accusations of cheating were more widespread than the evidence.

But the authority is considering measures to tighten security. They include later delivery of the question papers and withdrawal of a dispensation allowing heads to open question papers to make arrangements for children with special educational needs.

Heads and governors may also be asked next year to sign a solemn oath after the tests are completed that they have complied with all security procedures.

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Rt Hon Lord Douglas Hurd
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Sketch

Pint-sized, flat and lacking fizz

Simon Hoggart

YESTERDAY was Mr Hague's first Prime Minister's Questions, but the initial intervention came from a Labour MP, Dennis Turner. He wanted support for his Beer and Cider Bill, which would oblige barmaids and barchaps to serve "a full pint of beer with froth on top".

So the Tories laughed loudly when Mr Blair got to his feet. They regard him as little more than froth, or affect to.

The Prime Minister said he wanted the "British pint to be a good, honest pint".

Right on cue, Mr Hague rose. He is pint-sized, but has no froth on top. Or anything else for that matter.

John Major sat three benches back, trimly dressed in pink shirt and pastel blue tie. He might have been about to set out on a Saga Tour to Filey. He looked relaxed, very cheerful and deeply pleased not to be at the Despatch Box.

Mr Hague asked about Llew Smith, Labour MP for Blaenau Gwent, who has claimed that he was told by the Welsh Secretary that he would be thrown out of the Parliamentary Labour Party if he campaigned against a Welsh assembly. (This is one of those issues which is of little interest — even to Welsh people — and so excites MPs more than is reasonable.)

Ron Davies, the Welsh Secretary, denies having made this threat.

Mr Hague inquired who was telling the truth.

Mr Blair became evasive. Nobody had been threatened with expulsion. MPs were welcome to state their position, "provided they do so in accordance with the rules of the parliamentary party".

"Whooo!" went the Tories at this orotund euphemism.

Roger Gale, a FOJA (Friend of Jonathan Aitken), the MP for Thanet North, and the man who called a former editor of this newspaper "the whore from Hell", shouted, several times, "Tell us about open government!" Mr Gale was very red in the face.

Mr Hague persisted, this time about an alleged Labour council scandal in Wales.

Mr Gale grew even redder and angrier. "Tell us about servants of the public!" he yelled, then repeated it a few more times.

Mr Hague persisted through five questions and, for what it's worth, I thought won the exchange, though his last contribution ("What will you do to stop the arrogant behaviour of your government?") sounded somewhat stagey and contrived.

Mr Blair, who may have been poorly briefed, looked tricksy, which he is not good at.

On the other hand, Mr Hague's voice is terribly, drearily, achingly dull. His longer sentences bump downwards, phrase by phrase, like Pooh being tugged downstairs by Christopher Robin.

His later question on the Northern Ireland statement looked, typographically, like this:

Searching for (bump)
A credible (bump)
Way through the (bump)
Decommissioning (bump)
Block.
Bump.

Mr Blair's own tone was hectic and hurried. Speed was the essence. Talks had to start "as quickly as possible". There was "no time to waste". The "settlement train" was leaving. The settlement guard was blowing his whistle, and the settlement buffet would be open for the sale of drinks and light refreshments, though not tea or coffee owing to a malfunctioning heater. If Sinn Fein were not on board, they would have to follow on in a settlement bus. (Some of these points I have marginally enhanced.)

I understand his view that the time to act is now. But really! All this urgency after 29 years of the Troubles! Frankly, Mr Blair might just as easily have declared that he would insist on the talks being completed by the time the comet Hale-Bopp returns to our skies, for all the good it will do him.

I looked at Mr Gale, who by this time had fallen into a deep, untroubled sleep.

Cousteau's world . . . "The reason why I love the sea . . . It's physical . . . It's liberation of your weight," he said in a recent interview

JACQUES COUSTEAU 1910 – 1997

'Before Cousteau, the public only saw the surface of the oceans. Thanks to him, people discovered the source of life underneath them and the necessity to protect it'
– Greenpeace

Silent passing for old man of sea

Paul Webster in Paris

JACQUES-YVES Cousteau, the oceanographic explorer and one of the most popular of contemporary Frenchmen, has died at his Paris home at the age of 87, leaving scientists to throw doubts on the real value of his 50 books and underwater films.

Patrice Pomey, research director at the national scientific research centre, CNRS, said Cousteau, a former naval commander, preferred "beautiful images to scientific rigour", accusing him of mocking up some underwater scenes by transferring decor from elsewhere.

The Cousteau Foundation, which announced his death, said: "Jacques-Yves Cousteau has rejoined the Silent World" — referring to one of his most noted documentaries.

The popular success of Le Monde du Silence, which won the Palme d'Or at Cannes in 1956, and his long-running television explorations, financed with $4.2 million (£2.8 million) contracts from the ABC TV network, are unlikely to diminish affection in France, where he was repeatedly voted the country's most admired public figure.

In a recent interview he said: "The reason why I love the sea . . . It's physical . . . It's liberation of your weight."

Greenpeace said that before Cousteau, "the public only saw the surface of the oceans. Thanks to him, the public discovered the source of life that's underneath and the necessity to protect it."

Although born into a lawyer's family in Bordeaux, Cousteau spent most of his life on the Mediterranean, where he started underwater exploration in the thirties after a car crash wrecked his career as a naval air pilot.

In 1942, he developed the aqualung with its inventor, naval engineer Emile Gagnan, opening up endless possibilities for underwater research and making both men fortunes.

But Cousteau's wartime activities as a beached naval officer — the Vichy government forced the fleet to stay in Toulon — were never clear, although he was awarded the Legion d'Honneur in 1946 for helping the secret services.

By then, he had already shot his first underwater film, Par Dix-Huit Metres du Fond, which was shown to an audience including German officers in Paris in 1942.

While Cousteau's cinema and TV films were universally praised, his private life was troubled and tragic. A son, Philippe, who featured in many TV episodes, died in an exploration accident in 1979 and Cousteau fell out with another son, Jean-Michel, suing him when he tried to set up a Cousteau holiday centre in the Pacific.

He also led a double married life. While his wife, Simone Melchior, an admiral's daughter, ran the media business, he lived with an air hostess, Francine Trip, whom he married in 1991 after Simone died.

His profile as a campaigning environmentalist, however, obscured domestic problems and he became a hero as a protector of wildlife and an opponent of France's nuclear bomb policy, leading campaigns against the resumption of the Pacific tests by Jacques Chirac, the French president, in 1995.

He continued working full-time almost to the end. Three years ago he moved his team to a new Paris headquarters and started a number of expeditions. In January 1996, his favourite ship, Calypso, sank in Singapore harbour and he spent most of the rest of his life raising funds and designing a replacement research vessel, Calypso II.

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Review

Balcony-scaling hits new heights

David Adams

Much Ado About Nothing
Ludlow

AL FRESCO Shakespeare, as we know only too well from summers of heritage industry productions, has more to battle with than the text — not least the settings and the weather. Ludlow Festival is held in a delightful hilltop Marches town, with a captive audience of affluent culture vultures and a picturesque ruin of a castle that has occasionally tempted a director or designer to incorporate its crumbling walls and battlements to the detriment of the Shakespeare production, which is always the festival centrepiece.

Glen Walford's production of Much Ado About Nothing wisely uses Rodney Ford's multi-level, wood and rope construction with only the odd prop and is all the better for it, enabling some very enjoyable balcony-scaling and column-swinging from an amorous Benedick as well as somewhat less successful high-level delivery from an echoing Claudio.

It is Walford's free-flowing imagination that makes this year's production such a rewarding and stimulating show. Much Ado is a difficult comedy. But with a woman director and a powerful Beatrice in Toyah Wilcox, the sexual battle-lines are clearly drawn, with a strong band of sisters (well, cousins) outrageously treated by a group of very silly men, self-preening or callous, or both.

There is nothing very radical about it, but it is at least funny, clear and hugely entertaining. But does Mark Bowden's callow, fresh-faced Claudio have to smile so happily just before he publicly denounces the woman he allegedly loves? Can Martin McKellan's superficial dandyish poser of a Benedick really remain so self-engrossed? And why does John Oakley-Smith's music veer so disconcertingly between cod Elizabethan and something akin to the soundtrack of a '70s continental film comedy?

Actually, most of it makes for good fun that keeps you on your toes, while normally serious scenes are treated as crazily comic and vice versa. Melodrama and sexual politics, as well as tragedy and comedy, mix madly. The cast is impressive, making even the tedious bits of plot-setting seem engaging.

And it is headed by someone whose Kate, in The Taming Of The Shrew, was one of the best I've seen. Nearly 10 years on, Toyah Wilcox is still playing the shrew, only this time she has brought those qualities to Beatrice. Wilcox's delivery may have some weird sounds but she is a bundle of energy and a fine protector of her wronged cousin against an array of detestable males.

While the open-air Grand Hall of the Marcher Lords can be a pretty chilly auditorium on a June night, it did not rain. Even if it had, we would still have been glued to our seats.

Halford phone taps illegal

Bugging law to change as former police chief wins five-year battle

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

THE law on telephone tapping is to be reformed after a landmark legal ruling yesterday that the right to privacy of a former senior police officer had been invaded when she was put under secret surveillance by her colleagues.

Alison Halford, a former Assistant Chief Constable of Merseyside, won her five-year battle yesterday in the the European Court of Human Rights at Strasbourg, which ruled that the bugging of her office phones by fellow police officers had been illegal.

The unanimous ruling establishes a right to privacy for personal phone calls for all employees at work. It is to lead to Home Office ministers amending the law to ensure protection for employees against companies who listen in to their phones without their permission, as Strasbourg rulings are binding on the British government.

The court said that Miss Halford had a "reasonable expectation" of privacy in making and receiving phone calls at work, and there was no evidence that she had been warned that her phone might be bugged.

Government lawyers also accepted the claim made by Miss Halford, once the highest-ranking female police officer in Britain, that her former colleagues in Merseyside Police Authority had bugged her office phone to discredit her sex discrimination complaint against them.

She had been passed over for promotion nine times and lodged the complaint in 1990. Disciplinary action was taken against her by Merseyside police and a six-figure settlement was reached in 1992.

Alison Halford . . . delighted by Strasbourg judgment

Miss Halford, aged 57, said yesterday she was delighted with the Strasbourg ruling. "When it comes to tapping phones in this country the law as it stands indicates that you must be a terrorist, a subversive or a threat to the public. Bringing an equality action did not put me in that category."

She said that the "odd tinkling on my office phone" had started shortly after the sex discrimination complaint had started.

Merseyside's Chief Constable, James Sharples, tried to play down the significance of the judgment, saying that Miss Halford had accepted that English law did not prohibit intercepts of office telephones. "She therefore took the government to the European Court to ascertain whether that omission was a breach of European law."

But John Wadham, director of the civil rights organisation Liberty, said last night: "This is an important case. Very senior police officers were spying on one of their own employees whilst she was fighting a sex discrimination claim against them. The case establishes a very clear right to privacy for employees and the Government will now need to draft legislation to protect this right."

Diana pulls out of landmine meeting

Rebecca Smithers
Political Correspondent

DIANA, Princess of Wales yesterday pulled out of a House of Commons meeting to discuss the eradication of landmines, leaving campaigners disappointed and angry.

But she has left the door open for further discussions by inviting key MPs campaigning for a worldwide ban to a private meeting at Kensington Palace.

The princess bowed to pressure from Tory MPs, who had accused her of meddling in politics, and claimed her attendance would have been "untenable" because of the introduction of "a political dimension". Before the row threatened to overshadow the event, her staff had insisted that she would be attending the private meeting at Westminster as an observer.

Planned for some time, it was designed to recruit new MPs from the recent election intake to the all-party Landmines Eradication Group.

Its chairman, Labour MP Frank Cook, said: "I was never for a second concerned about constitutional issues. This is not a party political issue, it is an all-party group. Most MPs are happy about her involvement — it is a very small rump of backbenchers who are short of an issue to get the media attention they want. Twenty-five thousand people a year lose their lives while these small-minded backbenchers are arguing about details on an unjustified basis."

Independent MP Martin Bell, a former BBC war correspondent, said: "I find it so sad. It was going to be a private meeting. The issue is not political at all. I regret that she is not going to be there because her work in the cause has been inspiring."

Richard Miller, deputy director of the Catholic aid agency Cafod, which set up the all-party group last March, said: "Thousands of innocent civilians are killed and maimed by landmines every year and yet some countries around the world still refuse to ban them. Diana's continued interest has brought a major profile to the landmines campaign and we are extremely saddened that she felt it better to pull out.

"Diana understands that landmines are primarily a major humanitarian problem and should not be left to the whims of political expediency."

Tory MP Andrew Robathan, who attended last night's meeting, said he thought the princess had made "a wise decision" not to attend. Fewer than the 100 MPs originally predicted to support the meeting turned up, although those in attendance included George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, and Tory defence spokesman Robert Key.

The princess's opposition to landmines provoked a huge political row earlier this year, when the then Tory defence minister Earl Howe was said to have criticised her as "a loose cannon" at the time of a visit to Angola arranged by the Red Cross.

Blair sets September peace talks deadline for Sinn Fein

continued from page 1

stand by the existing bipartisan policy.

Mr Blair's initiative came as a man was being charged in Craigavon, Co Armagh, with the murders of two police officers in Lurgan a week last Monday.

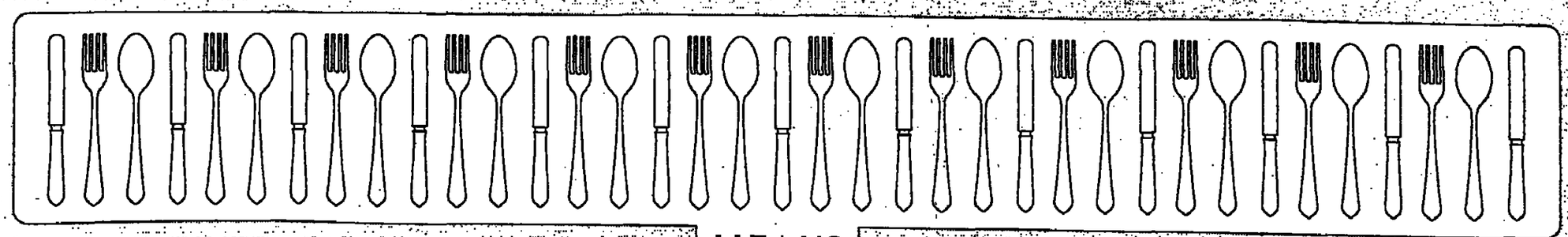
Colin Duffy, aged 29, is accused of murdering Constable David Johnston and Constable John Graham, who were gunned down while on beat patrol just yards from Lurgan RUC station. Mr Duffy's lawyer said he strenuously denied the charges.

Meanwhile the RUC in Belfast foiled a terrorist attack when they seized two fully loaded AK-47 high-powered rifles. One man was arrested in a follow-up security operation in Dunmurry in the south of the city.

In the Commons Mr Blair appealed for both sides in the Drumcree crisis to take up the Government's invitation to participate in proximity talks tomorrow. Portadown Orangemen who refuse to meet the nationalist Garvaghy Road spokesman Breandan Mac Clonnaith because he has an IRA conviction would not have to share a room with him, although the two sides would be in the same building at Hillsborough Castle.

But the Orange Order yesterday became the third organisation to announce its intention to hold daily parades in the centre of Londonderry between July 6 and July 12. The parades will go ahead if Orangemen are stopped from walking down Garvaghy Road after their service in Drumcree parish church on July 6. The nationalist Bogside Residents Group plans daily parades in Londonderry if the Garvaghy Road parade goes ahead. So does the Loyalist Ulster Community Action Network if it is stopped.

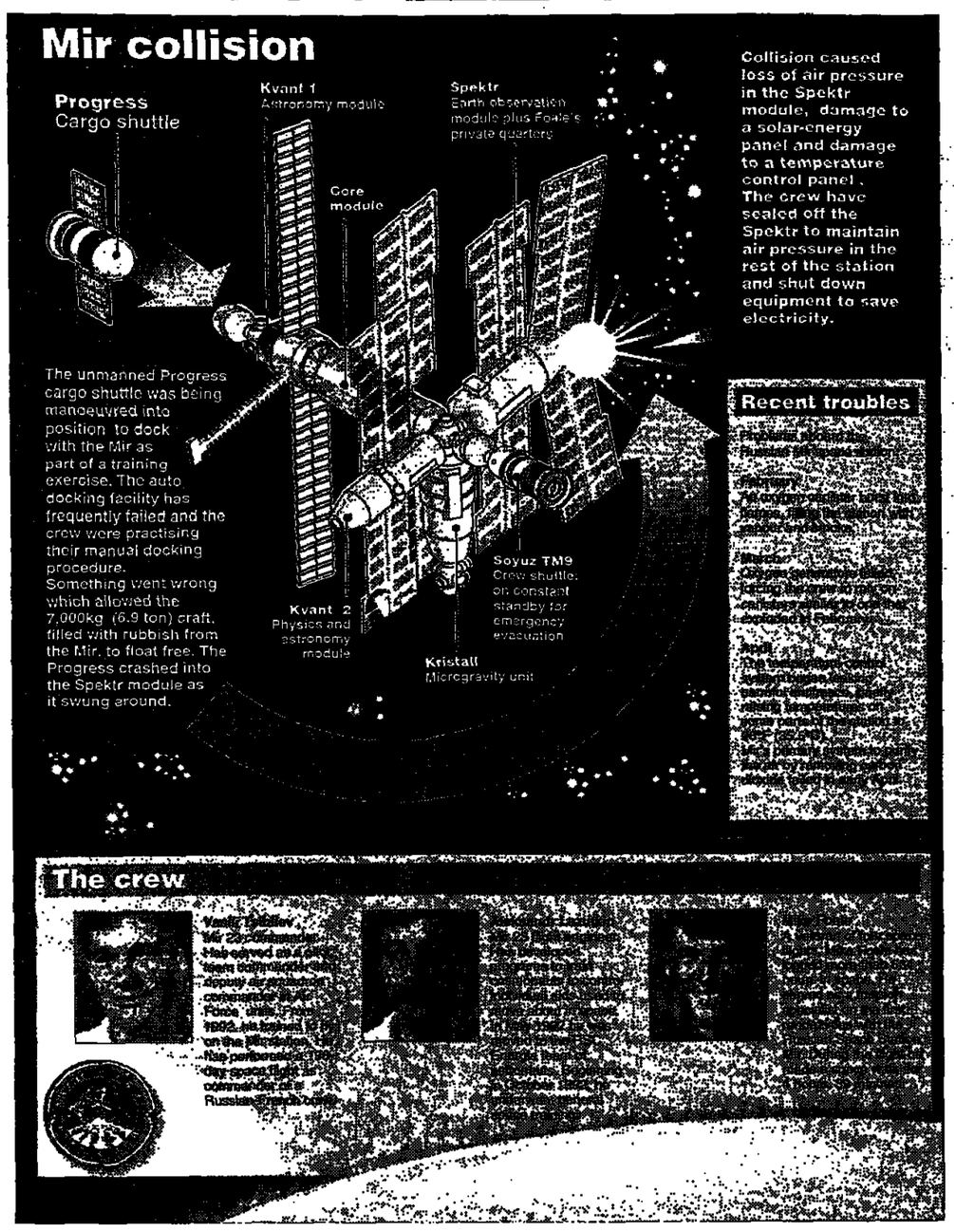
SUMMER SALE STARTS TODAY



FURNITURE LIGHTING FABRICS CHINA GLASS GIFTS BEDLINEN KITCHENS HEAL'S TOTTENHAM CRT RD W1 · KINGS RD SW3 · TUNSGATE GUILDFORD

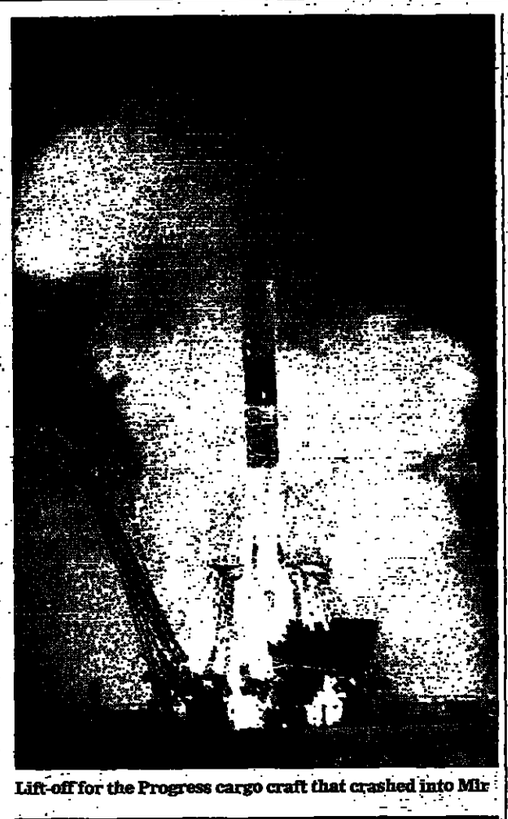
هكذا من الاصل

Mir collision



Collision caused loss of air pressure in the Spektr module, damage to a solar-energy panel and damage to a temperature control panel. The crew have sealed off the Spektr to maintain air pressure in the rest of the station and shut down equipment to save electricity.

The unmanned Progress cargo shuttle was being manoeuvred into position to dock with the Mir as part of a training exercise. The auto docking facility has frequently failed and the crew were practising their manual docking procedure. Something went wrong which allowed the 7,000kg (6.9 ton) craft, filled with rubbish from the Mir, to float free. The Progress crashed into the Spektr module as it swung around.



Lift-off for the Progress cargo craft that crashed into Mir

One of Mir's solar panels damaged by the supply ship

Welfare squeeze to 'force out better-off'

Larry Elliott
Economics Editor

BRITAIN'S middle classes are poised to opt out of state health and education in droves over the next few years in a revolt against the Government's squeeze on public expenditure, a leading taxation and spending expert warned yesterday.

Andrew Dilnot, director of the independent Institute for Fiscal Studies, predicted a doubling of the sums spent on private schools and healthcare if Labour persisted with the expenditure plans inherited from the Conservatives. He said the planned squeeze was unprecedented in modern times, even surpassing that under the Tories.

"With anything like the current spending plans, the shift to higher private relative to public spending will continue, indeed accelerate," Mr Dilnot said at a conference organised by the Economic and Social Research Council.

He added that the welfare state was an engine for redistribution, with a large minority of the population paying the bulk of the taxes and receiving relatively little back. Any cutbacks in health and education similar to those seen in pensions in the 1980s were likely to trigger a flight into the private sector.

"We have learned from the case of pensions that it is possible to privatise the provision of previously public services by squeezing them to the point that the middle classes want something better, and will buy it for themselves. Moving provision of health and education to the private sector in this way might be the line of least resistance, but that is hardly enough to recommend it."

The Government has begun a fundamental review of public expenditure designed to find ways of channelling public spending into its priority areas of education and health. Its flagship welfare to work policy is also designed to save money on benefits which can then be recycled from the £90 billion social security budget into schools and the NHS. However, for the next two years Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, has pledged to hit the targets laid down last year by Kenneth Clarke.

Mr Dilnot said the planned squeeze was far more severe than anything achieved in the 18 years of the Thatcher-Major administrations, and came as demand for better health and education services was growing fast.

He said that from 1979 to 1997 public spending rose by 1.9 per cent a year in real (inflation-adjusted) terms, but the Treasury was projecting growth of less than half of 1 per cent a year over the course of the current parliament. Health spending — which has grown at 3 per cent a year since the NHS was founded in 1948 — is projected to be flat in both 1998-99 and 1999-2000, while the plans for the Department for Education and Employment and the local authorities indicate cuts.

> 'If we are to move away from free education and health, we should be honest about it'

Until the mid-1970s, he said, higher spending on the welfare state had been accommodated by rising taxation. "Since then it has been met in some areas by shifting resources within total public spending, and in some areas simply has not been met, leading to higher private spending."

"Looking ahead, there seems every likelihood that in the next decade, on current policies, the share of private spending will double again in health and education. And it is important to note that some evidence suggests, unsurprisingly perhaps, that private consumption of healthcare reduces support for enhanced tax-funded public provision.

"And if we are to move away from universal, free and comprehensive provision of health and education, we should be open and honest about it, as we were not and are not about the change in pension provision."

Leader comment, page 8;
City notebook, page 11

17m bits of rubbish in a hurry

The Mir space station had a lucky escape yesterday but, as **Tim Radford** reports, it was an accident waiting to happen

SPACE is a shooting gallery. Stay there long enough and sooner or later you get hit. What happened to Russia's Mir station was little more than a parking accident. But it could have ended in multiple tragedy and it could yet spell the end of a record tenure of 100 tons of crumbling hardware in orbit.

When the shuttle last docked with Mir, cosmonauts and astronauts used the occasion for a quick damage survey. They found the fabric of the spacecraft battered and pitted with impact craters and they found a 10cm hole in a solar array: in effect, a bullet hole.

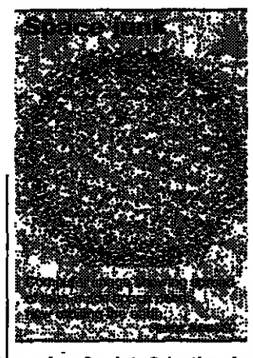
Russian, American and European and other space agencies have been firing stuff into orbit since 1957. Now a United States radar programme has to keep track of 3,000 tons of hardware racing round the planet at 18,000mph. There are about 9,000 objects ranging in size from a cellphone to Mir.

But these, too, tend to collide with each other. Some — such as rocket casings — seem to explode of their own accord. So in addition to the big stuff, there are probably another 100,000 bits of stuff bigger than a fingernail.

Even something this size is lethal. The calculation is that a £1 coin at six miles a second has the same impact as a minibus at 60mph.

When one of these hits another, there are more fragments. There could be 17 million bits of garbage bigger than a millimetre and each of these packs the punch of a high velocity bullet.

Engineers have repeatedly had to replace windows on the US space shuttle because these have been pitted by tiny



specks of paint. Scientists in Britain working on the skin of the European recoverable spacecraft — they put it up just to see what would happen to it — have found even odder hazards in high orbit.

They counted 30,000 tiny craters. In one of them, they identified injury from splashes of human urine, jettisoned from some earlier manned mission which had orbited the globe every 90 minutes or so, alternately freezing and thawing as it went in and out of the planet's shadow, finally to smack into a spacecraft moored there as a target for spacedust.

Experts have been warning of a disaster for years. The European Space Agency this year called a conference on how to handle the problem. It will become more urgent with each passing week.

Even without the man-made junk, space is a busy place. Tens of thousands of micrometeorites, lumps of sleet and fragments of star-dust crash into the Earth every day. The upper edges of the atmosphere are baked by powerful cosmic rays — the first astronauts used to complain of mysterious flashing lights as the rays burst through the Gemini and Apollo spacecraft — and the climate is fierce: the temperature rises and falls by about 100C every time you go out of the shadow of the Earth and back into it again.

But soon astronauts will have to face a lot more of these hazards. Russia and the US are the principal partners in the International Space Station, a controversial and much-amended proposal to build a kind of scientific laboratory and hotel in space. That is why astronauts dock with Mir and join the crew and why cosmonauts return on the shuttle: the Americans need to build up endurance in space and the Russians need to get their hands on US technology, so that both can work together, welding and bolting a huge structure in the sky.

Mir — a hotel and laboratory for the past 11 years — is vital to the programme. But the station has been spinning round the globe for twice its planned life. Every thump from a micrometeorite or orbiting spanner puts it in danger. Yesterday's accident could turn out to be the beginning of the end.

Old banger that fell on hard times

Underpaid cosmonauts kept on their toes by litany of troubles

Tim Radford
Science Editor

EVEN at the best of times, Mir was an accident waiting to happen. It was launched in 1986, equipped with technology developed in the seventies to settle questions first posed in the sixties.

One of these was: what happens to people who stay in orbit for a long time? One answer could have been predicted — sooner or later, they become careless and make a mistake.

In fact, Mir has kept the Russian cosmonauts on their toes. Nobody expected what was once state-of-the-art space engineering to still be on the road, an old banger, with bits falling off, 11 years later. Mir has had a chapter of accidents, some almost risible, some nightmarish.

Last year, the lavatories overflowed. In February, an oxygen canister burst into flames and had to be doused with a wet towel and a fire extinguisher. In March, both oxygen generators failed and the crew had to burn oxygen-generating candles.

In April, the coolant system began dripping ethylene glycol antifreeze — dangerous to breathe — and the temperature rose to more than 30C. The crew had to wear masks while they made repairs. Because of the leaks, the air-purifying system faltered and carbon dioxide began to build up.

All through these troubles, the cosmonauts had to play host to American guests Shannon Lucid, the 53-year-old mother of three, Jerry Linenger, and — since mid-May — Michael Foale, the Lincolnshire-born scientist who went to the United States because, above all else, he wanted to be an astronaut. He said at the time he was looking forward to the excitement. He got it.

Even before yesterday's accident, there were troubles with the delivery vans. Although each shuttle visit brings new crew and supplies, the basic bread-and-butter is delivered by an unmanned progress M-33 cargo ship. One robot ship missed Mir altogether, and the Russians wondered whether they could afford to build another.

Money is at the heart of the problem. The agency that was once the spearhead of Soviet technology is having trouble paying its workers. When it does pay them, the money is not enough. Men and women who were once the world's highest-flying engineers now moonlight by driving taxis to keep themselves working in the space business.

Russia's first module for the International Space Station is badly delayed. And Mir's new spare parts have not been budgeted for. Experts may soon decide it can not be kept working.

Dr Richard Crowther, of Britain's Defence Evaluation and Research Agency at Farnborough, said: "I guess it is similar to the Apollo 13 incident. They will set up review teams and consider the implications of the failures that will be occurring. If they cannot control things like the heating and cooling inside, it is only a matter of time before they evacuate."

No recreation was allowed. No ball games, cards or board games. Punishment for playing was confinement to a dark room for three months.
Sandra Gregory on life in the "Bangkok Hilton"

Women G2 page 4

Middle road Blair seeks to take has stony ground on either side

David Sharrock on an hour of decision

An RUC forensics laboratory employee displays two AK-47 assault rifles discovered yesterday at a house in West Belfast PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL McERLANE

Crucial 10 days for Ulster

THE next 10 days in Northern Ireland could be the most crucial in its history as its two traditional foes — violent nationalism and Unionism — decide whether to join Tony Blair's peace train or lead the province back down the road to hell via the opportunities offered by Drumcree for serious civil disturbance.

The key challenge now to the Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams, and the Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble — effectively acknowledged in the Prime Minister's Commons speech as the chief protagonists in the decommissioning drama — is that the terms on offer are non-negotiable.

Mr Adams and Mr Trimble face complications in selling the only reasonable compromise between the two hard-line positions of weapons disposal before or after serious deal-making on Northern Ireland's political future.

Mr Blair has taken the middle road between Sinn Fein's demand to leave decommissioning until a political settlement is reached, and the Unionists' call for arms to be given up before the talks begin. Instead, decommissioning should proceed in parallel to the talks, Mr Blair told the Commons.

On Tuesday evening Mr Adams's vice-president, Pat Doherty, who has been regarded until recently as a hawk, gave the unpublished details of the Anglo-Irish plan a surprisingly positive response.

In reality, the difficulties involved in getting a new IRA ceasefire are far greater for the republican movement's political elite than in August 1994.

Republicans cite the "bad faith" of the British Government during the last ceasefire as the chief reason for what may now be an unbridgeable gulf of mistrust. But an equally compelling factor is the fact that the foot soldiers of the IRA are much better informed than they were three years ago when the leadership imposed its will and opted to "enhance the democratic process" by ceasing fire.

For some, the deaths of so many of their comrades, the years of imprisonment and the widows left behind, weigh exceedingly heavily upon them and to have gone through so many years of struggle, as they see it, for a political settlement which falls far short of the IRA's mission to free Ireland of British sovereignty is a crushing experience.

All of Mr Adams's leadership skills will be on the line in the coming days as he labours to sell the "fudge" on arms as an honourable route into the holy grail of all-party talks.

Crucial to his success will be the ability to argue that there is no loss of principle in discussing decommissioning as a separate issue to the real meat of forging a political disposition — so long as it does not lead to an actual handover of IRA weapons.

And herein lies the mirror-image problem for Mr Trimble, who as de facto chief of the Unionist family has his own militant wing, principally in the shape of Ian Paisley, to consider. For he is being invited to enter a negotiating chamber in which Mr Adams may be sitting without any guarantee that a single ounce of Semtex or bullet will be handed up for many months, possibly until the crosses and dots are being applied to a settlement paper.

It is a poignant irony that the fates of both men are now bound so tightly together. Mr Trimble must hope that the IRA will turn down Mr Blair's proposals, therefore leaving him free and unfettered to push ahead with the talks process in the absence of Sinn Fein.

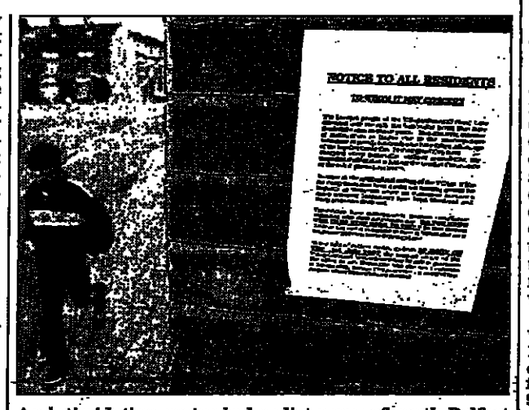
Mr Adams will also pray that the Ulster Unionist leader lacks the courage to accept the latest package, giving him tangible proof that the majority Protestant population is not interested in or capable of reaching an agreement with the pan-nationalist front and therefore consigning his decommissioning dilemma to the dustbin.

As the two leaders weigh up the odds of the biggest political gamble of their lives, Northern Ireland slides closer towards the chaos promised at Drumcree, where the Protestants and Catholics of Portadown are proxy combatants in the larger tribal struggle.

Sinn Fein wants another meeting with government officials in order to achieve "clarity" — a demand which was roundly condemned by the SDLP deputy leader, Seamus Mallon, yesterday. Mr Trimble is likely to want more time and meetings also. Mr Blair's "final offer" levels the playing field — Sinn Fein and the IRA may no longer be perceived as the sole obstacle to the peace train's departure.

But the calendar Mr Blair sketched out yesterday looks overly optimistic. If substantive talks are to begin on time in early September, the IRA must call its ceasefire by mid-July. Just how bad the marching season is may be the best indicator available of their intentions.

Key challenge facing both Trimble and Adams over decommissioning issue is that terms on offer are non-negotiable



An intimidating poster in loyalist areas of south Belfast warns Catholic residents to quit PHOTOGRAPH: CRISPIN RODWELL

Leader comment, page 8; Hugo Young, page 9

BA in threat to sue staff after vote backs strike

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

BRITISH Airways last night raised the stakes in the dispute which threatens flights for thousands of holidaymakers by warning staff who have backed strike action that they could be sued through the courts for loss of business.

The warning, hotly contested by the unions, came as the company yesterday sent out personal letters to 12,000 BA cabin crew. They were promised protection from pickets and offers of up to £75 cash if they used taxis or minicabs to get to work.

Bob Ayling, the company's chief executive, insisted that BA would also be within its legal rights to sack staff or take away their promotion rights or chance of early retirement. He said pickets would be banned from coach pick-up points, and staff would be urged not to wear uniforms to work.

Many staff yesterday reacted with amazement to BA's tough line. It was regarded as a deliberate return to the 1980s-style confrontation which culminated in the year-long miners' strike.

If the strike takes place, it will be the first serious industrial dispute of the Blair government.

Mr Ayling, a personal friend of the Prime Minister, has told Tony Blair that he does not want any government intervention.

The Transport and General Workers' Union, which had earlier announced a 3-1 vote in favour of strike action by cabin crew staff, rejected the company's claim that staff could be sued individually. A spokesman said: "BA either does not understand the law or is to trying to undermine our people. BA is only entitled to sue the union if it thinks that the strike ballot is misleading or has been badly worded."

In the ballot 6,400 members voted for strike action with 1,770 against. The TGWU is expecting a similar Yes vote for industrial action among 9,000 ground staff in a separate dispute over the sale of BA's catering division. This result is expected on Monday.

Under law the union has to give seven days notice of action, which could start as early as July 7 with a series of 24- or 48-hour stoppages.

About 30,000 of BA's 50,000 staff have already voted for a stringent pay and conditions package as part of the company's target to save £1 billion by 2000. Some of them have accepted a two-year pay freeze. The company says the cabin crew have been offered rises of between 14 and 24 per cent, with allowances consolidated into basic pay.

Mr Ayling said: "There is no reason or justification for this strike. We will not be held back by 1970s-style trade unionism. Even if it comes to a strike we will put our customers first."

A stoppage would affect all inter-continental flights from Heathrow and Gatwick, but BA's domestic flights should be unaffected.

'There is no reason for this strike. We will not be held back by 1970s-style trade unionism'

George Ryde, the TGWU's national officer for civil aviation, said: "It is the largest majority we have ever had in a ballot of this kind. All we are demanding is that the company returns to the table. But instead of this, it has been preparing for a confrontation."

For the past six months BA has been training 3,000 managers to break the strike. They would carry out check-in and baggage handling work, and the company is advertising round Heathrow for 600 contract jobs, which could become permanent.

A "dirty tricks" element entered the dispute last night when company sources suggested that an inter-union row at Heathrow, which led to a fight between two union officials, was largely responsible for the sour industrial relations at Heathrow. One official, Mike Coleman, has been dismissed by BA, but the TGWU has taken up his case.

Home recorder a multi-million blow to CDs

Alex Bellos

THE music industry reacted nervously yesterday to the unveiling in Amsterdam of an affordable CD recorder which will allow home copying on to blank discs with the same ease as tape-to-tape machines.

Industry officials accepted that the advent of home compact disc recording was inevitable, but predicted it would cost record companies hundreds of millions of pounds in lost revenue.

Philips will launch its CD recorder in the autumn in the UK and Europe, and next year in the United States and Far East. It will retail at about £600, although the price should quickly drop. Within the next 18 months "twin recording CD decks" will become common on all-in-one music systems.

Philips denied that the product was a cynical exploitation of the CD market at the expense of the record industry. A spokesman said: "Consumers have always wanted them. We have always maintained that when we got to the right price, we would put them on the mass market. That's what we've done. I am sure certain companies will be annoyed but it is part of the onward march of technology."

Blank discs which can be recorded on only once will cost about £3 and multi-recording blank discs will cost £12, although again the price is expected to drop.

The machine will be able to record voices, radio, records and tapes, as well as CDs, at CD quality.

Andy Clough, deputy editor of What Hi-Fi? magazine, greeted the development enthusiastically: "We'd all like to have one of these. We all buy CDs and want to make copies to give to friends, and if this means we can do that, then it is very attractive indeed."

But industry bodies were more cautious, suggesting that "home piracy" would cut sales of CDs.

Catrin Hughes, of the International Federation of Phonographic Industries, said: "We lose about two billion dollars a year through piracy and the problem is getting worse. The problem of Joe Bloggs recording a CD for his friends will always be dwarfed by organised piracy."

Sara John, legal consultant of the British Phonographic Industry, said home taping of records cost the UK £100 million a year.

"If that was to be translated to CDs, that money would go up," she said.

The BPI failed to ban tape-to-tape machines when they were introduced, claiming they were "copyright infringement devices".

Legal firm puts a new slant on poetic justice

"I know you lawyers can, with ease,
Twist words and meanings as you please;
That language, by your skill made pliant,
Will bend to favour ev'ry client"
From The Dog And The Fox, by John Gay

Dan Glaister
Arts Correspondent

IMPRESSED by the similarities between the poet's and the lawyer's tasks, the legal firm Mishcon de Reya, which counts Princess Diana among its clients, has advertised for a poet in residence.

As opportunities for poets go, it is a big money appointment. The onerous task involves half a day's work per week in return for £10,000 per year. The advertisement appears under the headline "Law firm seeks poet in residence" in the latest issue of Poetry News, the newsletter of the Poetry Society.

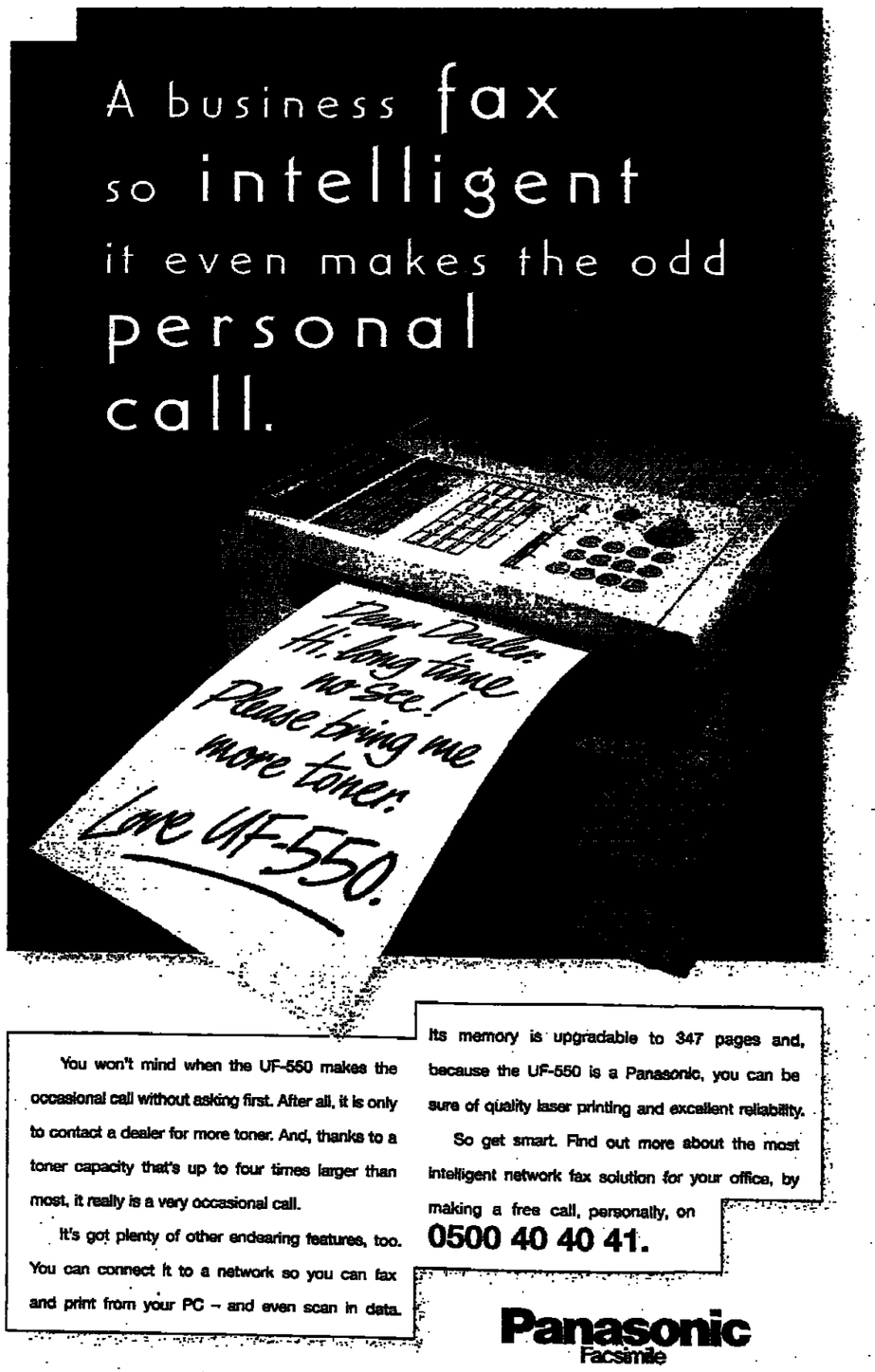
Kate Day, a partner at Mishcon de Reya, said: "Given that lawyers work with words, there was quite a groundswell of interest among the staff for the project. It's a discipline that isn't far away from what we do. If we do nothing else we should clarify and elucidate."

Anthony Julius, a senior partner at the firm and the man who negotiated the princess's divorce, is a poetry enthusiast. Last year he published a controversial book on T S Eliot which suggested that the poet had held anti-Semitic views. He is shortly to publish an essay on love poetry, which he describes as "a poetry of advocacy".

"Poetry is not some kind of verbal Prozac," he said when the residency was announced. "If it doesn't disturb and excite, it's not worth reading. We want to provide a stable environment and an income for somebody doing the important work of keeping the language alive. Having a poet in residence seemed an attractive way of helping our staff develop talents and interests that they might have in the direction of poetry. But people would be entitled to look askance if we started speaking in heroic couplets."

Mr Julius first suggested the idea in the spring, and approached another of his clients, the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts, which put him in contact with the Poetry Society.

Chris Meade, director of the Poetry Society, said: "We got very interested in the idea of the connections between legal language and poetic language. In both you are writing often about very emotional subjects, trying to give very precise statements about very messy human situations."



You won't mind when the UF-550 makes the occasional call without asking first. After all, it is only to contact a dealer for more toner. And, thanks to a toner capacity that's up to four times larger than most, it really is a very occasional call.

It's got plenty of other endearing features, too. You can connect it to a network so you can fax and print from your PC – and even scan in data. Its memory is upgradable to 347 pages and, because the UF-550 is a Panasonic, you can be sure of quality laser printing and excellent reliability.

So get smart. Find out more about the most intelligent network fax solution for your office, by making a free call, personally, on **0500 40 40 41.**

Panasonic
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News in brief

Lover 'knew of Aids risk' says accused

CYPRIOT fisherman Pavlos Georgiou yesterday denied that he negligently infected Briton Janette Pink with Aids, and claimed she knew he was HIV positive. He told a Cyprus court: "I insisted on using a condom, but she [Pink] was against it and we had free sex."

He said of the first time the couple had unprotected sex: "I was lying on the bed, I was not myself. She took the condom off me and in a flash she was on top of me. I couldn't control myself. To this day, that moment bothers me." He added: "It never crossed my mind to harm her in any way. I had Aids and I wouldn't condemn anyone else to the same fate."

Georgiou, who had a 2½-year relationship with Mrs Pink, is charged with knowingly infecting her with Aids. Mrs Pink has testified that he hid the fact he had Aids and failed to use a condom. The trial was adjourned until July 3.

Cows 'safe to burn as fuel'

THE Environment Agency confirmed yesterday that, after tests in two coal fired power stations, it would be safe to mix cows culled because of the BSE crisis with coal and burn them to make electricity. The cows would arrive pre-cooked from renderers, as meat and bonemeal and tallow, or candlewax. Britain has a stockpile of 225,000 tons of meat and bonemeal, and 115,000 tons of tallow, which could be mixed with coal and incinerated at temperatures of up to 1,450C.

"Tallow has much the same calorific value as fuel oil," said David Slater, director of environmental protection. It was unlikely any infection would survive. — *Tim Radford*

Boxer denies kerb crawling

FORMER boxing champion Herbie Hide yesterday pleaded not guilty to kerb crawling in Tottenham, north London, in April. During a five-minute hearing at Highgate magistrates court, Hide, of Catton, Norwich, spoke only to give his address and confirm his plea. The case was adjourned until August 27. Hide was given unconditional bail. He will attempt to regain the WBO world heavyweight title on Saturday.

Woman abducted and raped

A WOMAN was abducted and raped while waiting for her boyfriend in a red light district. The 20-year-old Bradford woman was outside a petrol station in Leicester while her boyfriend queued inside to buy cigarettes. Police said yesterday that a man started talking to her. She walked away but was grabbed from behind and bundled into a car before being taken to a terrace house and subjected to an hour-long ordeal. The rapist then dumped her near Leicester railway station.

Police ruled out any link with the serial rapist who has struck in Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire, but warned that the attacker could strike again.

Libyan link to murder

THE murder of an opponent of Col Gadaffi's regime, attacked with kebab skewers and stabbed through the heart in his butcher's shop, was probably "connected with the sinister world of Libyan politics", a coroner said yesterday. Ali Mehmed Abuzeid, also known as Haj Ali Al-Shami, aged 54, of Paddington, west London, had fled Libya with his family to escape Col Gaddafi's regime, the Westminster inquest was told. He was discovered in his Paddington shop in November 1995 with a knife sticking out of his chest and kebab skewers arranged on top of him. Coroner Paul Knapman recorded a verdict of unlawful killing.

Half time in football trial

THE prosecution in the retrial of three footballers accused of plotting to fix Premier League games concluded its case yesterday at Winchester crown court. The Crown alleges Bruce Grobbelaar, aged 39, John Fashanu, 34, and Hans Segers, 35, along with Malaysian businessman Heng Suan Lim, 31, were part of a plot involving a Far Eastern betting syndicate. The trial continues.

The Guardian

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Regulators vie for supremacy

Watchdogs in digital TV war

Andrew Culf
Media Correspondent

A BITTER war of words erupted yesterday between two powerful regulators over who should control Britain's digital television revolution.

Sir Robin Biggam, chairman of the Independent Television Commission, told Don Cruickshank, director general of Oftel, to keep his nose out of the commission's business.

The turf war broke out after Oftel had criticised the commission's decision to award licences to launch 15 digital terrestrial television channels to British Digital Broadcasting (BDB), backed by Carlton and Granada.

Oftel supported the application by the rival Digital Television Network, claiming BDB's victory would leave the satellite company BSkyB in too powerful a position.

Although the commission forced BSkyB to withdraw its stake in BDB, it will still provide three premium-priced channels: Sky Sports, Sky Movies and the Movie Channel.

The battle between the two regulators was being interpreted as the opening skirmish between the two bodies as the worlds of television and telecommunications converge. Both want supremacy before the Government creates a single communications "super regulator", Ofcom.

Sir Robin, interviewed on BBC Radio 5 Live, said the award of the licences had been a matter for the commission. Asked whether he shared Oftel's concerns about BSkyB's dominance, he said: "We don't necessarily share them with Oftel. It is nothing to do with Oftel ... responsibility for programming lies entirely with the ITC."

Sir Robin said: "I am not privy to what goes on in Mr Cruickshank's head ... It is nothing to do with him."

Asked whether Mr Cruickshank should keep his nose out of it, Sir Robin said: "Absolutely right."

A spokeswoman for Oftel refused to be drawn on Sir Robin's attack, but said Mr Cruickshank had a statutory duty to consider competition issues relating to telecommunications, including services relevant to broadcasting such as conditional access — control of the "gateway" to digital services.

Oftel, in its submission to the commission, said: "The participation of BSkyB either as a consortium member or as a long-term supplier of certain pay-television services, in particular sports programming, raised substantial competition concerns in the pay-television network and conditional access markets."

The commission has said it will continue to keep under review competition issues raised by BSkyB's programme supply deal with BDB. But it disputed Oftel's right to invite views from interested parties on the competition issues arising from BSkyB's involvement.

● The BBC said its consultation exercise over its planned free digital services — including 24-hour TV news, BBC Choice and BBC Inform — had found broad public approval, with 77 per cent of respondents indicating strong support for its public service plans. The majority wanted more educational, regional, international, sports and live events coverage.

'It is nothing to do with Oftel. Responsibility for programming lies entirely with the ITC. I am not privy to what goes on in Mr Cruickshank's head'

Sir Robin Biggam (left) on Don Cruickshank (right)

'The participation of BSkyB either as a consortium member or as a long-term supplier of certain services, raised substantial concerns in the pay-television network'

Oftel

Cutting edge ... Louise Clarke, a final year fine arts student, in her exibit Trophy Room, which is part of the degree show at Central St Martin's College of Art and Design, central London, which is open to the public from Saturday until next Thursday PHOTOGRAPH: KIPPA MATTHEWS

Irish in Britain 'bullied and held back'

Clare Longrigg

IRISH people in Britain suffer discrimination at work, are dismissed as scroungers by DSS staff, are bullied by their neighbours and are targeted by police, according to a report published yesterday.

The Commission for Racial Equality said racial harassment of Irish people went under-reported and unrecognised. It called for Irish to be made a distinct racial category so that their problems could be addressed by anti-discrimination laws.

Harassment at work includes name-calling and Irish jokes, which 79 per cent of people surveyed said they found offensive. Many said they were "deeply wounded" when colleagues automatically assumed they had sympathy for the IRA.

Some claimed they had not been promoted because of their Irish origins. Some who applied for benefits had found obstacles put in their way because of the stereotype of the Irish as feckless scroungers.

Researchers also found that Irish people were targeted for harassment because of their accent. The police were accused of unprovoked attacks and abuse of Irish people because of their origin.

The report says a disproportionate number of older Irish people are at the bottom of the heap, in unskilled work or unemployed, moving up the social scale slower than other ethnic groups. There are more Irish people in overcrowded and private rented accommodation than average, and more Irish men and women sleeping rough.

The report identified two waves of immigration, in the 1950s and in the 1980s. The latter, it says, was part of an Irish brain drain. The younger generation tended to be skilled and professional workers, and the number of highly qualified Irish-born people was proportionately greater than average, the report says.

Discrimination and the Irish in Britain: CRE, £10. Available from Central Books, 99 Wallis Road, London E9 5LN

Bogus English gent faces up to 270 years in prison

Christopher Reed
in Los Angeles

TO HIS neighbours in Beverly Hills, "the General" was the perfect English gent, silvery-haired, with a booming upper-class voice, wearing immaculate suits, and driving a Jaguar or a Lincoln Continental.

His brass office name-plate proclaimed him as General Marc Debden Moss OBE, and he dealt in an obscure form of commodities trading involving large sums known as refundable booking deposits. Unfortunately for his customers, they made all the deposits, and the "General" never paid refunds.

Nor was he a general, but a former sapper in the Royal Engineers, an official from the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall testified to a Los Angeles court. His army commission was as bogus as his deals and this week the jury found him guilty of 21 charges of fraud, money laundering, and tax evasion. He will be sentenced in September and could theoretically receive 270 years in prison.

Scotland Yard provided an affidavit confessing that although he had a London office from 1989 to 1992, his whereabouts before that remained a mystery, although they had been tracking him for years.

Moss, now aged 73, arrived in LA on a one-month tourist visa in 1992 and stayed on. He would tell potential customers in confidence that he was working on the "acquisition of the osmium isotope" and flash an identity card from the American Security Council in Washington — it does not exist.

Then he would offer shiploads of sugar from Turkey or Brazil, 100,000 tonnes of cement from Pakistan, and on one occasion 91 million Marlboro cigarettes destined for Moscow. Altogether his transactions brought him $3-5 million (£1.8 million-£3 million), but agents believe that 100 defrauded customers worldwide may have lost more.

When they demanded returns of their deposits, they found the sugar had melted away, leaving the "General" with $45,000 (£27,000).

The cement was backed by a "sham document from a non-existent bank in the south Pacific republic of Nauru," and the Marlboros vanished in a puff of smoke after Moss pocketed $1.9 million (£1.2 million).

In her final address the prosecutor quoted Shakespeare and described Moss as "one man in his time playing many parts." The part he played best, though, was the classic British conman.

Three killed as father jumps off cliff with sons in his arms

Sarah Boseley

A MURDER investigation was launched yesterday into the deaths of two small children who were killed, it is believed, when their father jumped off the 400ft high Beachy Head cliffs in Sussex, holding them in his arms.

Three bodies were seen at the foot of the cliffs by police at 7am yesterday, but poor weather made it difficult to recover them. The body of John Chetwynd, from Yeading, west London, and that of his one-year-old son were winched off the beach by a helicopter, but the crew, assisted by lifeboatmen in rain and high winds, found no trace of Mr Chetwynd's three-year-old son.

Some 30 police and coastguards, including a climber on a rope who examined rock ledges and dog handlers, searched the area in the afternoon. Last night at low tide, a police underwater and search team was again combing the beach and rocks. It was thought possible that the second child's body had been swept out to sea.

Sussex police were alerted to the tragedy when an empty Rover car was found at the top of the cliff, near Eastbourne. The car was later traced to the London area, and the Metropolitan police were informed.

There were suggestions last night that the deaths were the result of a marriage break-up. It was reported that Mr Chetwynd, an accountant, had attacked his wife, Hien, with a baseball bat on Tuesday night, leaving her with serious head injuries. It was suggested he had then got into the car with his children and driven to Beachy Head.

Detective Chief Inspector Bill Bunce, who is heading the inquiry, said the deaths were being treated as suspicious, but a third party was not being sought. "I can only conclude that the adult intended to take all three lives," he said.

National database will include test scores of 7 million children from primary school entry to A level

ID numbers to track pupils

John Carvel
Education Editor

EVERY schoolchild in England will be given a computerised personal identification number to allow the Government to track academic performance from the age of five, according to plans published yesterday by the curriculum authority.

Information stored in a national database will eventually include the scores of about 7 million pupils at "baseline" tests on entry to primary school, in the standard assessment tests at seven, 11 and 14, and in public exams for GCSE and A level.

The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority said it would consult on whether a child's truancy record should be included. Information would be covered by the Data Protection Act, but parents could check its accuracy.

The plan was revealed yesterday after Estelle Morris, the schools minister, said the Government wanted a new generation of "value added" school league tables to track how well children progressed.

Pupils' raw scores in tests did not show how the school was performing because they could not take account of social or economic characteristics. A school with a privileged middle class intake might coast along in the middle of the league without parents realising it was underperforming.

The Government wanted to measure the value added by the school by comparing pupils' results at each stage of their education. The first value added tables would be published next year, she said.

Curriculum authority officials said they could not measure the value added by schools without tracking individual children. The composition of classes changed, and in some areas there was a huge turnover.

"In order to ensure better tracking ... each pupil should, as soon as possible, be allocated a unique number," Ms Morris said.

"There is nothing to be frightened of. Schools and local education authorities have already got their own systems of pupil numbering, and we think it is important to have a national system," said David Hawker, the authority's assistant chief executive.

But John Wadham, director of Liberty, said: "This has clear civil liberties implications ... I am sure there are ways of constructing better school league tables without giving everyone numbers."

The Pin numbers are part of a review of school league tables announced by Ms Morris. She said the Government would stop publishing national tables of primary school performance, but would require local authorities to provide the information in their own areas.

The Government will continue to publish national league tables for secondary schools, adding a new improvement index.

Doug McAvoy, National Union of Teachers general secretary, said publication of league tables should be suspended pending consultation on "a sound means of monitoring school effectiveness".

● Local authorities in England yesterday agreed proposals to streamline the dismissal of incompetent teachers to two terms, compared with the present 18 months or more. The Local Government Association said talks with unions had been productive. It will now put its plans to ministers.

News in brief

Tamil Tiger assault claims 200 lives

MORE than 200 soldiers and rebels were killed in a battle in northern Sri Lanka, where troops are fighting Tamil Tiger separatists in an attempt to open a vital highway, the defence ministry said yesterday.

"Four officers and 60 soldiers were killed in action and 68 soldiers were wounded," a ministry statement said. "According to ground troops, over 150 terrorists were killed and a large number injured." Some of the Tigers' suicide bombers killed themselves when troops opened fire.

It said more than 1,000 Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels attacked military positions near Periyamadu, north of the government-held town of Vavuniya, late on Tuesday. — *Reuter, Colombo.*

Paedophile suspect's suicide

A SCHOOL teacher implicated in the recent paedophilia crackdown in France has hanged himself, police said yesterday. He was the fifth suspect to have committed suicide in less than a week.

The French justice minister, Elisabeth Guigou, is reviewing sentencing of child abusers after a round-up of alleged paedophiles and a Paris court case in which 71 men are accused of selling or buying pornographic videos involving children.

Justice ministry officials said yesterday that among measures being considered "to increase the protection of children" are compulsory medical treatment, and registration of changes of address for child sex offenders discharged from prison. — *Paul Webster, Paris.*

Cambodia slams 'meddling'

CAMBODIA'S first prime minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, yesterday called on China and the United States not to meddle in his country's internal affairs as his government waits for Khmer Rouge guerrillas to hand over the former tyrant Pol Pot.

Prince Ranariddh, who has asked the United Nations to set up an international tribunal to try Pol Pot for genocide and crimes against humanity, said it was up to Cambodia to decide what to do with the man held responsible for the deaths of 2 million people.

The UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan, has forwarded the Cambodian appeal to the UN Security Council, which instigated tribunals on atrocities in former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

Prince Ranariddh's comments came after China signalled its opposition to a tribunal on the grounds that Pol Pot's actions were an internal affair. — *Nick Cumming-Bruce, Phnom Penh.*

US judge halts deportations

A UNITED STATES federal judge blocked government efforts to deport as many as 40,000 Nicaraguans and other Latin Americans who were allowed to enter the US in the 1980s because of civil wars in their homelands.

The US district judge James Lawrence King said deportation would cause severe hardship for families with special medical needs or with children born US citizens.

"Seldom if ever has such a dramatic, heart-rending and powerfully persuasive case of irreparable harm to literally tens of thousands of human beings been presented to this federal court," he wrote in his order on Tuesday. — *AP, Miami.*

Clashes in Brazzaville

FRESH fighting erupted in the Congolese capital of Brazzaville yesterday, with shells hitting the city centre and a landmark hotel by the Congo river.

Mortar shells landed near the French embassy in the area controlled by the forces of President Pascal Lissouba. They appeared to come from the north, controlled by his rival, the former military leader Denis Sassou-Nguesso.

A charter airline pilot due to fly into Brazzaville yesterday cancelled the flight, saying Mr Sassou-Nguesso's forces seemed to be battling for the airport. — *Reuter, Brazzaville.*

'Sauna' minister suspended

THE Russian president, Boris Yeltsin, has suspended his justice minister, pending an inquiry into allegations that he was filmed in a gangland sauna.

Soon after the suspension on Tuesday, the interior minister, whose own department has faced criticism over how the film came to be made public, was reported to have confirmed the authenticity of the pictures and to have revealed that Mr Yeltsin was warned of them weeks ago. — *Reuter, Moscow.*

Scam pilot's body found

A SUICIDE note found near a decomposed body was signed with the name of a pilot missing since he was accused of stockpiling human ashes instead of scattering them at sea, authorities said yesterday.

"I'm sorry for the pain I've caused," the handwritten note said.

Al Vieira, aged 52, disappeared more than two weeks ago after authorities unlocked a storage shed packed with thousands of boxes of human ashes. He was paid £30-£60 for each set of remains he said he would scatter at sea.

A body was found on Tuesday about 200 yards from a car belonging to his girlfriend, Calaveras County sheriff's deputies said. A gun was found next to the body, and it was believed the man shot himself in the temple. Eleven boxes of cremated remains were found in the car.

"We think it is him, but we cannot say for sure," Lieutenant Randy Grasmuck said. — *AP, San Andreas, California.*

Golden flies unearthed

EGYPTIAN archaeologists working in the Nile Delta have found a necklace of golden flies thought to be a military decoration awarded by the Pharaoh Ahmose more than 3,500 years ago, a government newspaper said yesterday.

The necklace, with 19 pendants in the shape of flies, turned up in excavations at Tell Basta — best known for its cemetery of mummified cats — about 45 miles north-east of Cairo, al-Ahram reported. — *Reuter, Cairo.*

Pakistanis protest at arrest

Residents of Quetta, Pakistan, march in protest yesterday at the extradition of Aimal Kansi, arrested in connection with the 1993 murder of two CIA employees and handed over to US authorities PHOTOGRAPH: MOHAMMED ARSHAD

Bossi faces trial for insult

AN ITALIAN judge yesterday ordered the separatist Northern League leader, Umberto Bossi, to stand trial for comparing the deeply religious president, Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, to Rasputin.

Judge Clementina Forleo ordered the trial, for contempt of the head of state, to start on March 17 next year. Mr Bossi has already been sentenced to eight months in one case involving illegal party financing and faces two further cases on charges of incitement to violence, aggravated threats and defamation.

The offending remark, comparing Mr Scalfaro to the mystic monk who enthralled the wife of Russia's last Tsar, appeared in an interview with the Milan Corriere della Sera newspaper in 1993. Earlier this month, Mr Bossi was ordered to stand trial for urging supporters to "identify and pursue" far-right voters. — *Reuter.*

Handover countdown

Boycott comes unstuck

Hong Kong 1842-1997

Andrew Higgins

AN Anglo-American drive to mobilise a boycott of Hong Kong's unelected post-colonial legislature flagged yesterday with Europe shrugging off solidarity and even London and Washington announcing they would send senior diplomats — though not ministers — to a pre-dawn swearing-in of the puppet assembly next week.

With only five days to go before Britain ends a colonial venture which began with a war over opium in 1841, the incoming government of Tung Chee-hwa introduced a new system of honours to reward "fostering a love for the motherland among Hong Kong people" and replace the knighthoods and British orders previously used to cement the loyalty of plutocrats.

But in a gesture of continuity, the lawyer chosen to serve as Hong Kong's chief justice from July 1, Andrew Li, decided to keep the wigs, robes and other paraphernalia of courtroom attire.

British authority has waned to the point where the Hong Kong government had to allay concern yesterday that the People's Liberation Army had already taken up security duties. The troops, dressed in olive green trousers and carrying metal cases, were identified as members of the PLA military band.

The Foreign Office in London said Britain remained "adamantly opposed" to the replacement of Hong Kong's current elected legislature with an appointed body, but would send its future consul general and another senior official to the disputed investiture. The United States will also send its consul-general.

> 'It has created some confusion. It certainly suggests inconsistency'

The Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, will meet his European counterparts in Luxembourg today to discuss maintaining pressure on China for democracy in Hong Kong after the handover.

The Democratic Party leader, Martin Lee, who has set himself on a collision course with Mr Tung's government with plans for a protest rally in the early hours of July 1, criticised the shift from what had previously seemed a total boycott. "It has created some confusion. It certainly suggests inconsistency."

Allan Lee, leader of the pro-business Liberal Party, applauded what he called a "sensible rethink".

Britain has little leverage left. It earlier climbed down over Chinese demands for the deployment of armed soldiers in Hong Kong before midnight. Britain first said no, and then, in addition to an unarmed advance Chinese guard of 196, quietly agreed to allow a further 500 PLA troops in three hours before the lowering of the union flag.

Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, and Mr Cook will both still stay away from a ceremony to install the government of the Special Administrative Region — as Hong Kong will be called.

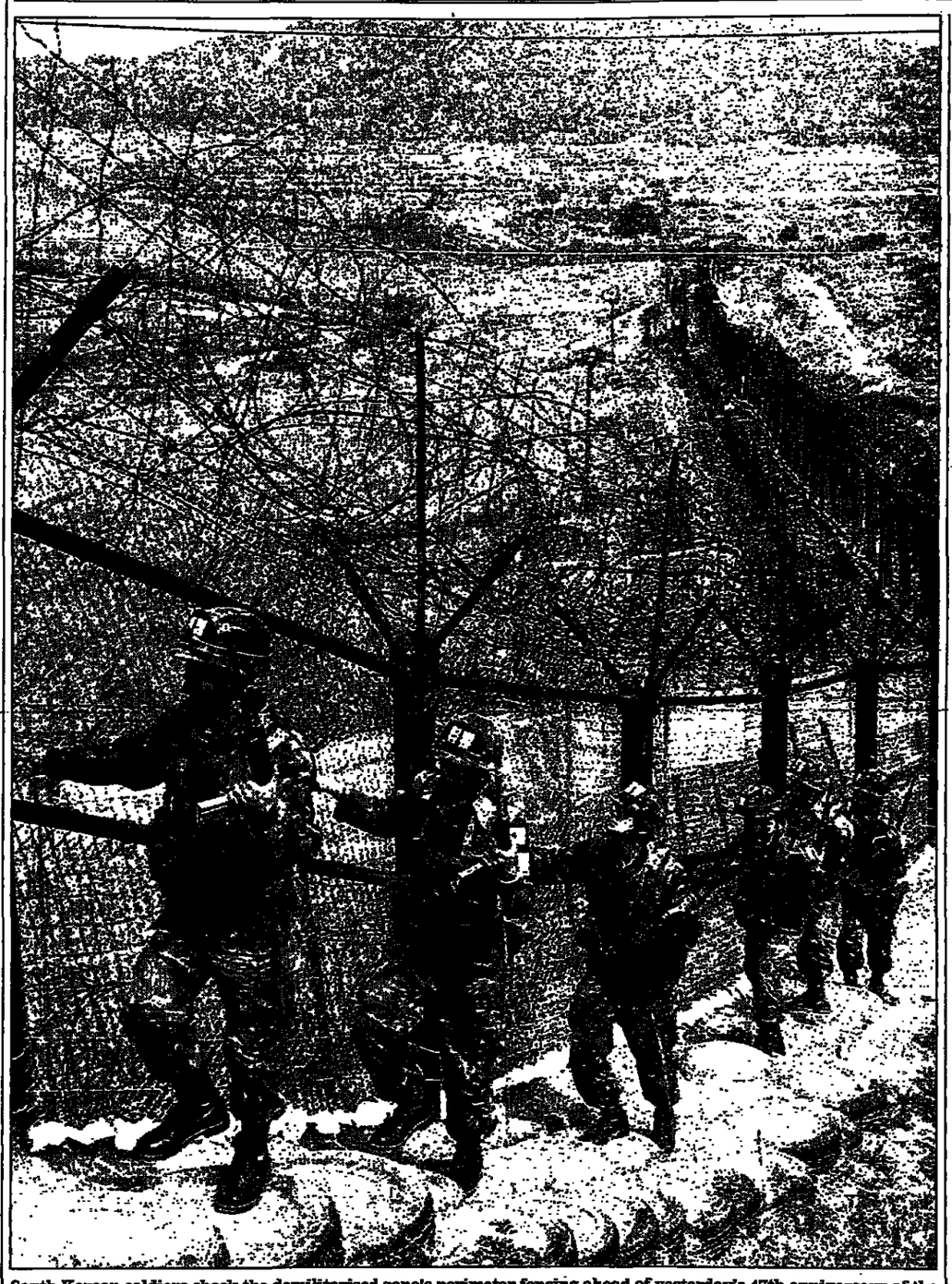
Also absent will be Madeleine Albright, the US secretary of state. No large European country has joined the Anglo-American protest. To be sworn in are 60 unelected members of a provisional legislative council, the chief executive, Mr Tung, the chief justice, Mr Li, and other officials.

Twelve Hong Kong residents, including Sir Sze-yuen Chung, a colonial-era grandee who served four British governors but now says he would prefer to drop his title, will receive the Grand Bauhinia Medal, named after Hong Kong's official flower.

Another recipient is Eisie Tu, a former missionary from Tyneside who has delighted Beijing with frequent attacks on Governor Chris Patten.

Britain will be represented at the swearing-in by Francis Cornish, the consul-general after July 1, and Hugh Davies, head of the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group.

"This is not a climbdown," said a Foreign Office spokesman. "It was never something we said we would not do."



South Korean soldiers check the demilitarised zone's perimeter fencing ahead of yesterday's 47th anniversary of the Korean War. North and South Korea are still technically at war as the conflict ended in a truce PHOTOGRAPH: LEE SUK-WOO

Desperate North Korea ready for talk about talks

SENIOR officials from the US, North Korea and South Korea will meet in New York next Monday in a new attempt to get peace talks for the divided peninsula going, the US state department announced yesterday.

The acting assistant secretary of state Charles Kartman will meet the deputy foreign ministers of the two Koreas to discuss an American proposal for four-party talks which would eventually involve China.

Observers said acceptance of peace talks represented a reversal of North Korea's previous stand that any peace treaty must exclude South Korea and also underlined the seriousness of its food problem. — Reuter.

Nigeria 'must be kept out'

Ian Black
Diplomatic Editor

NIGERIA should not be allowed to return to the Commonwealth because it has made no progress on human rights or democracy since being suspended, the British Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, said yesterday.

Mr Cook made clear that Britain would be pursuing its ethical approach to foreign policy with a tough line at October's meeting of Commonwealth heads of government in Edinburgh.

"Nothing has happened that would justify the lifting of the suspension," he told diplomatic correspondents. "Nigeria is for the moment outside the Commonwealth and should stay outside the Commonwealth."

Mr Cook's comments came in advance of a meeting next month of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, an eight-member body set up after the November 1995 hangings of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other minority Ogoni activists.

"Nigeria is an interesting example of how economic progress and human rights are complementary," he said. "Nigeria should be the second richest country in Africa. What holds it back is a corrupt regime and very poor standards of governance."

But Mr Cook sidestepped the question of whether Nigeria's failure to respond to concerns about abuses of human rights should now lead to its expulsion from the Commonwealth.

Britain's stance could mean a row with African countries, especially close supporters of Nigeria, like Zimbabwe and Ghana, or regimes such as that in Malaysia which like to put human rights into a regional rather than a universal context.

Nigeria's record has been under international scrutiny since the army, under General Sani Abacha, annulled a presidential election in 1993 that would have ended military rule.

Its suspension from the Commonwealth was followed by an arms sales ban and other low-level sanctions by Britain, the European Union, the US and some Commonwealth countries. But no Commonwealth member has shown an appetite for oil sanctions because of the interests of multinational companies such as Shell.

Senate shifts goal posts on health care for elderly

Martin Walker
In Washington

OLD age begins at 67 — and should be means-tested — the United States Senate resolved yesterday, in a bold, bi-partisan and controversial effort to stave off the impending bankruptcy of the Medicare system for the elderly.

The Senate voted 62-38 to increase the age of eligibility for the state-subsidised health system from 65 to 67, and then voted 70-30 to impose a means test under which those on higher income would pay much steeper premiums.

Each reform has already been recommended by the American Medical Association, and the fate of bringing cost control to the politically sensitive issue of health care for the growing aged population is being closely watched by other countries.

At present, a monthly premium of $43.80 (£26.10) is deducted from the pension cheques of the 39 million Americans aged over 65, providing unlimited medical care. Under the new plan, the premiums of seniors earning more than $100,000 a year would quadruple. Premiums would not change for those earning less than $50,000.

But the real problem is the two-year health cover gap between retirement, usually at age 65, and qualifying for Medicare. At that age, private health insurance plans cost about $6,500 a year — half of those on Medicare now have incomes below $10,000 a year.

Lobby groups are already blanketing the airwaves with opposition to the plan. Senators expect a flood of angry phone calls and letters.

President Clinton wants the politically explosive reforms removed before the House votes on them. But that would be difficult as they are tied into the overall budget bill, which the Republican leaders and the White House are determined to preserve since it represents a historic compromise to balance the federal budget by the year 2002.

The vote to raise the qualifying age reflects the growing sense of financial crisis over Medicare and Medicaid, which cost more than $270 billion and are growing at 9 per cent a year.

Prenuptial deal on divorce offers couples test of true love

Alex Duval Smith
In Washington

DO YOU really love me? Or do you really really love me? Spouses-to-be in Louisiana are to be invited to consider the difference under a law which will provide a choice between a standard marriage and one in which divorce is more difficult.

For better or for worse, conservatives crusading against no-fault divorce laws in the United States yesterday gave courting couples more to think about than just whom to invite and where the reception should be held.

From August 15, fiancés in Louisiana will have a choice between a no-fault marriage and what is being called a covenant marriage.

Under the law, couples opting for a covenant marriage will only be able to divorce in the case of proven adultery, abuse, abandonment or imprisonment for a criminal offence. They will be obliged to receive pre-marital counselling.

Tony Perkins, a Baton Rouge Republican who sponsored the bill, said: "I think it will prevent potentially weak marriages. When a man says he wants a no-fault marriage and a woman says she wants a covenant marriage, that is going to raise some red flags.

"She is going to say: 'What? You're not willing to have a lifelong commitment to me?'," said Mr Perkins, a 34-year-old father of two who has been married for 11 years.

Conservative Christians argue that no-fault divorces are responsible for a 34 per cent increase in marriage break-ups between 1970 and 1990.

Nearly half of all marriages in the US now end in divorce, compared to about a third in 1970.

Arne Owens, a spokesman for the Christian Coalition welcomed the Louisiana legislation. "Divorce is for us a family issue because of all the consequences, especially for children," he said.

Albanian election lacks campaign

Candidates from more than 30 parties are standing in weekend polls, but most are too scared of being shot to face voters, reports **Joanna Robertson** in Gramsh

ALBANIANS are entering the home stretch of what must rank as one of Europe's most bizarre elections.

Candidates, fearful of being shot off their soap boxes, have engaged in campaigning only reluctantly. The electorate has little idea of what, if anything, the 30 or so political parties are offering. And indeed very few parties have policies.

None has put forward a credible way to deal — after Sunday's vote — with the country's social, financial and security crises.

Fatos Nano, leader of the Socialist Party, was turned back from the northern town of Rreshen by armed gangs last week, and the people of the southern port of Vlore have made it clear to the president, Sali Berisha, that he would not survive a visit to their town.

Despite this, Albanians insist that there is no north-south split between supporters. The president's Democratic Party has campaigned in the southern town of Korce, and Mr Nano has peacefully visited Kukes in the north.

After seven bombs exploded within five days in Tirana, the prime minister, Bashkin Fino, pleaded for "an end to this bloody period of campaigning". More than 1,500 people have been killed since the beginning of March.

The election is based on the ruthless advancement of personal power, with candidates making extravagant promises to gain popularity. Mr Nano fell to his knees and wept before the people of Vlore, the self-styled capital of the south, promising to return the thousands of millions of pounds Albanians lost in fraudulent pyramid investment schemes.

If Vlore chose to believe Mr Nano, voters further north in Gramsh, 50 miles south-east of Tirana, were not so impressed. With almost 100 per cent unemployment, the town's inhabitants are relying for survival on selling arms stolen from the town's six army depots, trading with dealers from Macedonia and Kosova, and locals.

Most people in Gramsh support Mr Nano's Socialist Party, but not for reasons of policy. A woman explained: "It's simple, we'll vote for anyone who gets rid of Berisha."

The elections will include an opportunity to vote to restore the monarchy. The self-appointed King Leka of the Albanians has been travelling the country with his royal court trailing behind him in a fleet of sagging Mercedes. It's a valiant effort to drum up support in the villages of former retainers of his father, King Zog. King Leka attracts large crowds, but most simply seem curious to judge whether he looks like a king.

For a country used to one candidate at elections for almost 50 years under the Communist dictator, Enver Hoxha, the array of options can be bewildering.

"Voting has become a crazy matter of blind faith," a man in Gramsh said. "There is too much choice, and at the same time none at all. At least under Hoxha we could be certain of the election result."

● An Italian businessman shot dead three Albanians who tried to rob him, local officials said yesterday. The incident in Lac, 25 miles north of Tirana, was the first time a foreign civilian has used force to stop armed bandits, who have picked on foreign workers and journalists in the run-up to the elections.

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Environment conference

Summit may be too late for seals

World Bank targets CFCs

Paul Brown in New York

THE World Bank will put up £20 million to phase out production of ozone-depleting chemicals in seven factories in Russia in the next 18 months, to stem the international black market in CFCs, it was announced yesterday at the United Nations Earth Summit review conference.

The Russian CFCs — half the world's production — are widely available in Europe and the United States, where they are used to top up obsolete air-conditioning and refrigeration units.

James Wolfensohn, president of the World Bank, also announced a partnership with the World Wide Fund for Nature to conserve 10 per cent of the forest cover in every country. In addition, 100 million hectares of forests in northern countries and a similar area in the tropics will be brought under sustainable management — compared to less than 6 million hectares at present.

Taking a break from the summit, John Prescott, Britain's Deputy Prime Minister, went walkabout on streets he last visited 30 years ago as a merchant seaman.

He came to see how the new creed of "zero tolerance" of crime, cleaning the streets and offering "bums" jobs, had transformed central Manhattan and might be applied in British cities.

Daniel Biederman, president of the clean-up scheme and a Newt Gingrich acolyte, told Mr Prescott of private funding for a private police force, a homeless rehabilitation scheme and a voluntary tax on skyscraper owners.

Bryants Park was once "needle park" — a no-go area for anyone but drug dealers. Its crime [illegible] was 360 a year, including [illegible] murders. There have be[illegible] two recorded felonies in the past six years.

Thousands of free chairs have been donated to the park, where 6,000 office workers now eat their sandwiches.

Office-block owners pay 1.5 per cent above normal city taxes to fund the clean-up. In central Manhattan, with 71 million sq ft of offices, this brings in $32 million (£20 million) a year.

The investment pays. The block next to "needle park" was half-empty and could command rents of only £10 a square foot before. In five years, this rose to £30.

The tax pays about 320 people, many street cleaners who also tend new flowers and street trees.

Mr Biederman spoke of a centre where the homeless have a four-course meal and are then offered work at $6 (£4) an hour and a flat.

"About a third take up the offer at first go, and about half of them turn up for work. When the rest see others making the grade, they change their minds. Their theme is 'we never had a chance'. We give them one, and it works."

There are 820 once-homeless people back in work and paying commercial rents. "Quite a few have married each other," Mr Biederman said.

The private police are unarmed and trained to be polite. They "manage people", but make citizen's arrests if a crime is committed.

The commercial heart of Manhattan and the subway are now graffiti-free — it is scrubbed off by the former homeless cleaning squads within an hour. "The kids hardly do it any more because there is no immortality," Mr Biederman said.

Mr Prescott seemed impressed. "Everyone seems to benefit. The extra money creates extra value for the people who have to pay the tax and the people who use the streets. There are certainly a lot of ideas here that could be translated back to Britain."

The end looms for rare species

John Hooper, Southern Europe Correspondent

AS THE world's leaders wrangle at the New York Earth Summit, one of the planet's 10 most endangered mammals has been lurching to the brink of extinction.

In just 40 days, an estimated two-fifths of Mediterranean monk seals have been wiped out, and scientists fear they may be unable to save what remains of the last big colony because of bureaucratic delay and diplomatic sensitivity.

Paddy Pomeroy, a British biologist who returned with colleagues last week from the colony on the north-west coast of Africa, said: "We walked along the beach and there were bodies every 20 to 30 yards. It was an astounding sight."

The Mediterranean monk seal has already largely been ousted from its natural habitats by competition and harassment from fishermen. Most survivors lived until mid-May in colonies beyond the mouth of the Mediterranean, in the eastern Atlantic.

The largest straddles the disputed frontier between Mauritania and the Western Sahara. With a population of almost 300, this has been monitored since 1992 by Spanish scientists from the universities of Barcelona and Las Palmas.

The deputy leader of the Barcelona team, Alex Aguilar, told the Guardian yesterday, that since May 17, when they found the first dead animal, a further 104 corpses had been located.

Mediterranean monk seals from a fast-dwindling population swim off the coast of Africa PHOTOGRAPH: BRUCE COLEMAN

"However, we believe that the total death toll is between 200 and 210, and that others died at sea or have been washed out to sea. We deduce this on the basis of the number of animals still alive. We have only been able to count between 80 and 90."

He said evidence pointed to poisoning by algae. On May 31, a meeting of international experts in Amsterdam agreed on a plan.

"We have the antidote," Dr Aguilar said. "But we haven't been able to use it. The problem is that in order to treat the animals, they have to be confined, and some kind of enclosure has to be built. The trouble is that the colony is in a militarised zone which is also in dispute. We are having great difficulty getting the necessary permission."

He said the plan was backed by officials managing Mauritania's Banque d'Arguin national park, and that so far he had encountered no opposition from civil or military authorities — "quite the reverse". But he said bureaucratic procedures were slow and Mauritania faced a serious diplomatic problem.

Some of the caves in which the seals live are in Mauritania. But others are inside the formerly Spanish Western Sahara, claimed and partly occupied by Morocco. Yet others are in disputed frontier areas.

Mauritania gave up its claim to the Western Sahara in 1979, but has never renounced an interest in some border territory.

Building, or authorising, an enclosure could be interpreted as provocation, and part of the area is mined.

Dr Pomeroy said: "I cannot think of anywhere more difficult to work."

Drugs '8pc of world trade'

Chris Taylor

THE world's drug trade has grown dramatically over the last decade and is now bigger than international trade in iron and steel and motor vehicles, according to a United Nations report.

The annual turnover in drugs is estimated at $400 billion (£250 billion) — about 8 per cent of international trade. By contrast, official development aid totals $69 billion.

The World Drug Report, compiled by the UN international drug control programme, attempts to draw together information on the production, trafficking, consumption and health effects of drugs and efforts to tackle them. The task is made more difficult by the fact that every aspect of the business is conducted outside the law.

For the first time the UNDCP has attempted to estimate numbers of drug abusers. According to the report, 8 million people took heroin at least once during the previous year, compared to 13 million for cocaine, 30 million for amphetamine-type drugs, and 141 million for cannabis. Cannabis use is dwarfed by the 227 million people estimated to be using sedatives.

World production of coca leaf more than doubled between 1985 and 1996, while opium production more than tripled. Although seizures have also increased, a drop in the retail price of narcotics indicates that more are getting through to customers.

The report warns of a growing globalisation of the trade, with the traffickers taking often circuitous routes to get their product to market. Drug consumption is spreading to new areas. UN officials warn that Africa and the former Soviet Union face drug epidemics — with dire social consequences.

The report surveys the debate about policy options, including legalisation, but, perhaps surprisingly given the dramatic failure of efforts to date, recommends a familiar mixture of crop eradication, destruction of production facilities and interdiction of trafficking, combined with programmes to reduce demand.

MINOLTA

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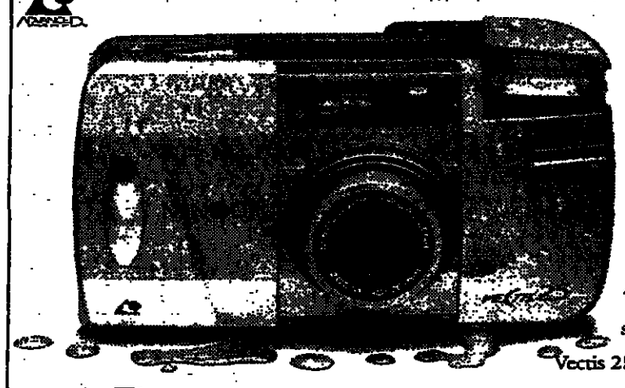

Few cameras can stand up to a sudden downpour or take kindly to a poolside splashing.

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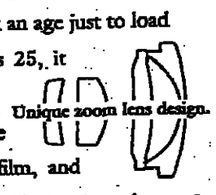

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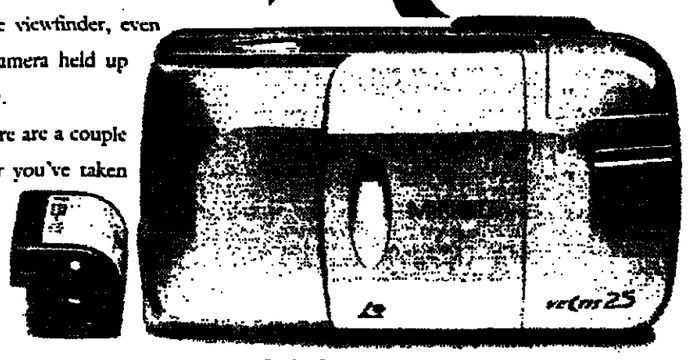

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Bold move on thin ice

But will either Irish side respond to Blair?

THE prime minister called it the moment of decision. And so it is, though there have been moments of decision before in Northern Ireland. When decision time calls, Ulster's politicians - republican as much as loyalist - mostly tend to decide against rather than favour change. Will Labour's latest initiative be any more successful in moving the stalled talks process out of the anteroom and into the conference chamber? Perhaps so, at least because there is a widespread perception that the Blair government has a mandate to try and an equally widespread sense that the current position in Northern Ireland is too fragile to last. Even among sceptics on both sides of the divide, there is a feeling that having come this far they ought to give it another go. There's a decent line-up of support among international interested parties too, with Washington prominent in the wings alongside Dublin. And Mr Blair is good at playing the populist card, as he proved with his exploitation of young Margaret Gibney's peace letter. These are all reasons to be cautiously cheerful.

But there are plenty of reasons to be wary too. This is certainly a moment of decision for the IRA, but it is also a moment of decision for the Unionist parties. None of these sounded yesterday as though they were very ready to sit down with Sinn Fein in the timescale envisaged by Mr Blair. The most important of them, David Trimble's Ulster Unionists, even condemned the new decommissioning document as "seriously defective" and then set out a vision of the parallel talks and decommissioning processes which Sinn Fein and the IRA would obviously never accept. And if Mr Trimble's decision to get down to talks cannot be taken for granted, then that is even more true of the republicans. The IRA has a terrible track record of shattering hopes, even in more propitious times than these. Its Lurgan killings ten days ago were an outright snub to the Blair initiative, as the prime minister again angrily spelled out in the Commons, and such events cannot be dismissed as though they do not matter. In the hours leading up to yesterday's announcement, the IRA was again actively trying to kill and injure in Lurgan and in west Belfast. Though the prime minister's announcement was centrally about weapons decommissioning, there is not the slightest public indication that the IRA or Sinn Fein has any intention whatever of handing over a single gun either before or during the talks, always assuming they choose to try to take part in them. Only a very bold person would pretend that the chances are good, especially with Drumcree barely a fortnight away.

None of this means that Mr Blair's initiative is doomed. With a bit of finesse, it may just succeed in conjuring another ceasefire from the IRA. That would truly be a major achievement. It would mean that Labour had managed to get the show back on the road at about the point that it left it under John Major the winter before last. With a ceasefire, though, all sorts of things become more possible, above all talks about the kind of compromise deal that, as the prime minister repeated, everyone knows is at the end of Northern Ireland's snakes and ladders board. To the overwhelming majority of people in Britain and Ireland, that is something really worth securing. But is pluralist devolution to Northern Ireland and an array of north-south arrangements an appealing enough prospect to a generation of republican militants whose eyes remain undeflectedly on a much bigger prize? That remains the great unanswered question, but it is difficult to be hopeful that the answer is yes.

Before symptoms get worse

Why Labour must come up with more cash now

NO ISSUE is more likely to trip Labour up than the shortfall in health service funding. All services are suffering from Labour's imprudent adoption of Tory spending plans for their first two years of office but none is suffering as badly as health. The dear old British Medicial Association has cried wolf so many times, the public may not be stirred by the pleas from senior health service managers at this week's NHS Confederation conference. But they are not shroud-waving. NHS debt will be rising by £1 million a day. Last year's debt reached £300 million and this year's funding is far worse. After four years of annual rises of four per cent, the NHS is getting only one per cent this year and next year faces a mere 0.2 per cent. That represents one twentieth the increase of recent years. All this when waiting lists — remember one of the five sacred Labour credit card promises is to reduce them — have already reached a record level beyond one million and are still rising. Hence Paddy Ashdown's pressure on the Prime Minister in Parliament yesterday — and the demands by the health service conference in Brighton — to change the spending programme.

There was some movement yesterday by both Messrs Blair and Dobson. There was no firm commitment from Mr Blair during Prime Minister's questions, but compared to last week he seemed more ready to consider allowing savings by other departments in Whitehall's current spending review to be transferred to health. The Health Secretary had an even more interesting wheeze: new "health action zones" in eight inner city areas in which local councils would become involved as well as health authorities in planning health services. There would be two obvious benefits to the health service: access to the Department of Environment's £3.4 billion single regeneration budget and perhaps even more important, health authorities might no longer find themselves being blocked by local councils in the urgent restructuring of health facilities. Manchester city council, for example, went to the high court to stop one health reorganisation plan. Other modernisation plans in Bristol and Birmingham have been blocked — forcing Birmingham to rely on hospitals built more than 60 years ago. New services cannot be opened if communities insist on retaining the old. Far from rejecting these proposed new links with local authorities, NHS managers' initial response yesterday was extremely positive. It may well be the key to ending the planning blight in which many health services have been trapped.

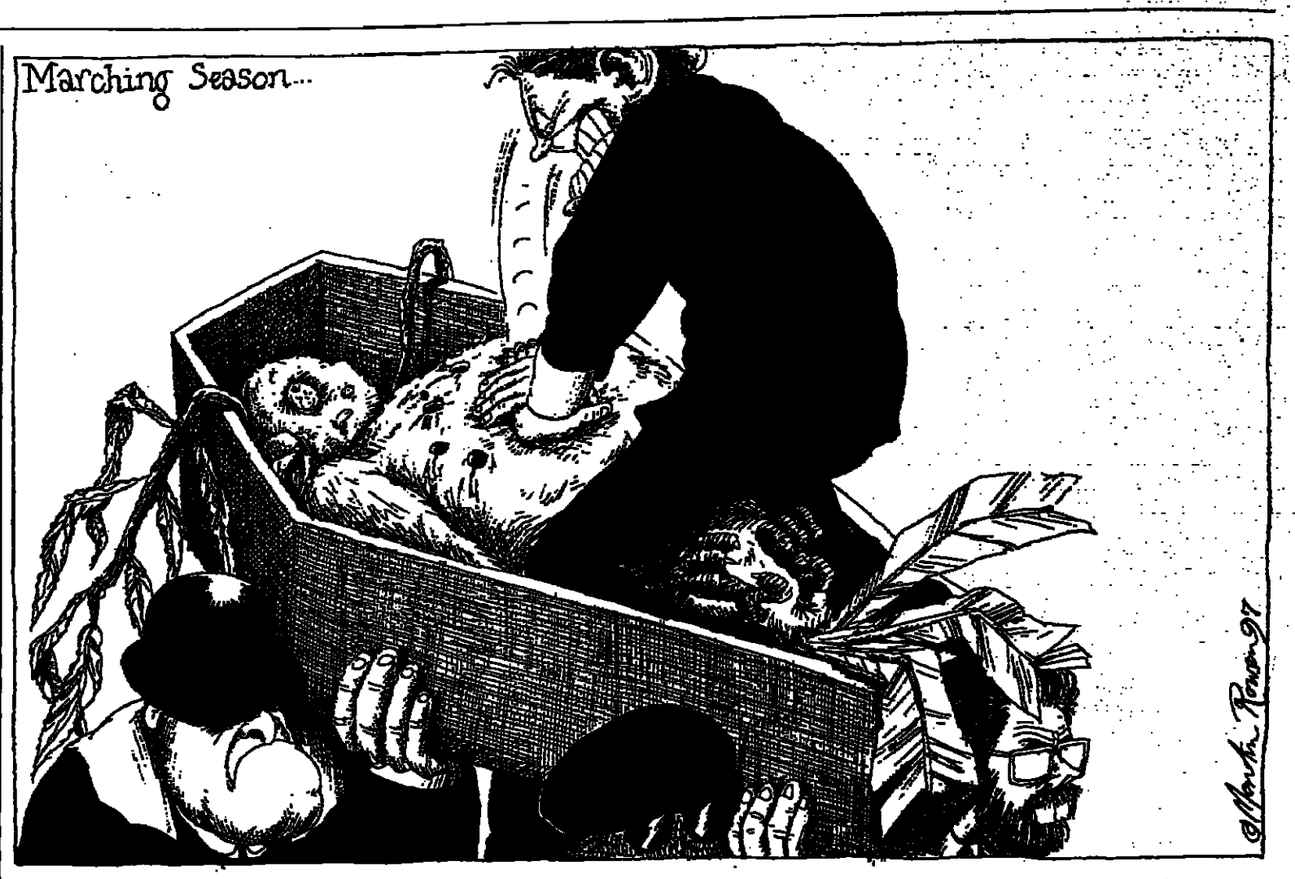
But health action zones by themselves will not solve the under-funding problem. Moreover, they are unlikely to start for at least a year. Rather than wait until a winter-generated crisis, Labour should signal in next week's budget its readiness to use the contingency fund to resolve the NHS funding crisis. The Tories would not have kept to their plans. Why should Labour?

Beware a dangerous man

Ariel Sharon is bad news for Middle East peace

Putting together a cabinet can be a difficult business, but any democratic leader would be wise to beware taking a short cut with a man like Ariel Sharon. Israel's corpulent former defence minister, and the prime mover of the 1982 Lebanon war now looks like being the main beneficiary as the hapless Binyamin Netanyahu tries to salvage his Likud government. Mr Netanyahu survived a no confidence vote in the Knesset on Tuesday but he is still in deep trouble. He faces vocal opposition from members of his own party, like the former finance minister, Dan Meridor, and Beni Begin, a trenchant critic from the right. His justice minister was widely criticised for what Israeli commentators have called a "thuggish" attack on the newly-elected Labour opposition leader, Ehud Barak.

Israeli politics have always been a rough and ready business, but this week's unseemliness has a wider effect: to cast a heavy pall over the prospects for renewed negotiations with the Palestinians. True, Israel is at peace with Egypt and Jordan, but the Oslo process has been stuck in the sand since Mr Netanyahu's March provocative decision to begin building in East Jerusalem, ending the momentum built up by the pullback from Hebron. Mr Netanyahu has bought his way out of this crisis by concessions to Russian immigrants and hardline settlers. Now Mr Sharon is tipped to get the finance ministry, which he seems certain to use to divert more funds to bolster Jewish outposts in the West Bank. No-one in the Middle East has forgotten how he misled his cabinet colleagues in 1982, starting the most divisive war in Israel's history. Mr Sharon's elevation has aptly been described as a red rag to an Arab bull. But he should be opposed by anyone who hopes to revive the fading dream of a just peace in the region.



Letters to the Editor

How the Dome will shape up

YOU say the Millennium Dome will leave "footprints for posterity" (Leader, June 20). But what kind of posterity? The exhibits in the Dome, as well as the forces that brought it about, will, on present trends, represent a version of the information society in which knowledge is power for the few, and a source of wonder for the rest.

It would be good to be able to believe that Lord Rogers and New Labour could contribute to a different version. But signs are not promising. Rogers has yet to explain, for example, how he managed to misrepresent Greenpeace's views on the suitability of PVC as the building material.

There are people who are seeking to develop cities and information that meet the needs of citizens, and not just for élites. This would seem relevant to "the third way" about which the Prime Minister talks. But is this priority reflected in the chatter at the River Café?
Bob Catterall.
Editor, City journal.
5 Dryden Street,
London WC2E 9NB.

THE Millennium site could play a vital role in changing the nation from Old Great Britain into New Great Britain. How? Simply by converting the interior of the Dome into a New Parliament from which New Labour can govern a New Nation.
Marcus Roberts.
15a Gayfield Square,
Edinburgh EH1 3NX.

JENNIFER Page has a secure job for three years, and she's paid £150,000 a year. If the Millennium Dome is completed on time, she'll receive £45,500 as a "success fee". Presumably, nobody is hired to make things fail. If this arrangement has any logic to it, how much of her salary is Ms Page supposed to reimburse if the Dome is not ready on time?
G E Gil.
11 Alwyne Place,
London N1 2NL.

IF THE Government is seriously committed to environmental issues, why not make the Millennium Dome a renewable-energy power station, to supply the needs of Greenwich for the millennium and beyond? Britain could lead the world in alternative technology given the will and the funds, and a fair amount of the latter is earmarked for this project.
Sandy Ransford.
3 Church View, Main Street,
Taddington,
Derbys SK17 9TX.

But was it genocide?

I AM writing to question your use of the word *genocide* in relation to the Pol Pot massacres in Cambodia (End of the nightmare, June 24). The definition of genocide is contained in the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and the Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, as "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group". The killing of political and social groups was not included in 1948.

The convention's explicit emphasis on ethnic identity and groups is understandable in light of the doctrine of racial superiority in Nazi ideology. This is often cited as a limitation of the convention. While Pol Pot killed two million compatriots, he could not be charged with genocide because he was not targeting a specific ethnic or racial group. There has recently been a suggestion that the Genocide Convention be expanded to include political and social groups, but the UN committee which is drafting the statute for an international criminal court has decided against a change.

The word *genocide* has recently become popular again. The over-use of the word has led to desensitisation about what genocide means. The Guardian article unfortunately described "more recent crimes against humanity in Bosnia and Rwanda". However, under the Genocide Convention, the organised extermination of Tutsi in Rwanda in 1994 has been classified by international lawyers as the century's third clear case of genocide — preceded by the Turkish genocide against the Armenians and the Holocaust.

Some people hold that the loss of life of those struggling for basic human needs forms the largest group of victims of genocide and that what operates in the world is a Holocaust of neglect. This maximalist approach would lead to an endless list of genocides. Such an approach blurs the lines and allows those states which have ratified the convention to hide in a fog of misinformation and thus fail to respond to obligations to prevent or punish genocide.
Linda Melvern.
57 Albion Road,
London N16 9PP.

NICK Cumming-Bruce's eager anticipation of the trial of Pol Pot for genocide fails to mention that this could have occurred almost two decades ago if China, the US and her regional ally, Thailand, had been supportive of the Vietnamese who drove Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge from power in 1979.

Instead, as part of a continuing policy of destabilisation and isolationism against Vietnam, these countries actively supported the Khmer Rouge, providing military, financial and political aid. It was only in 1990 that the US withdrew its political support for the Khmer Rouge-backed representative to the UN.

The consequences are that Cambodia has suffered an almost continuous guerrilla war since "the killing fields" were exposed by the Vietnamese; hundreds of thousands have died and continue to die. While other countries in the region are experiencing rapid development, Cambodia is only just emerging from its isolation.
Peter Campbell.
56 Haverstock Hill,
London NW3 2BH.

NICK Cumming-Bruce writes in relation to the reported capture of Pol Pot: "Never before has a trial taken place of the director of genocide." I draw his attention to the trial in the early 1960s of Adolf Eichmann, the Nazi administrator of the "Final Solution", who was found guilty in the District Court of Jerusalem of "crimes against the Jewish people", an Israeli statutory offence modelled on the definition of genocide contained in the Genocide Convention of 1948.
Roger O'Keefe.
Magdalene College,
Cambridge CB3 0AG.

Sir Robin as Mr Aitken's batman

I AGREE with Hugo Young (Commentary, June 24) that the downfall of Jonathan Aitken underlines how unwise it was of Sir Robin Butler to agree to the then prime minister's request to advise on the Aitken affair. Inevitably, Sir Robin was used by Jonathan Aitken to exonerate him from the charges made by the Guardian.

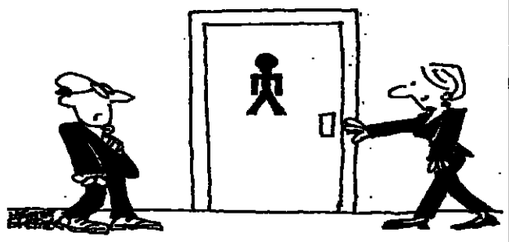
When Sir Robin appeared in front of the Treasury and Civil Service Sub-Committee on March 8, 1995 to justify his involvement, I asked him whether he would act in the same way again. He replied: "Yes." But surely one lesson to be learnt from what happened is that the Cabinet Secretary is, as Hugo Young says, "wholly unequipped for judgment" on these kinds of issues, and should never be asked again to get involved.

I am less sure than Hugo Young that the office of Cabinet Secretary ought to be combined with being in charge of the Civil Service. These are two very different jobs, one being to act on behalf of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the other to be top manager and constitutional guardian of the Civil Service. Arguably the first function is always given priority, probably to the disadvantage of the second.
Giles Radice MP.
House of Commons,
London SW1A 0AA.

No fellowship

I AM baffled by Dr Germaine Greer's opposition to Dr Rachel Padman's fellowship at Newnham College (Row at all-women college over sex change fellow, June 24). Surely Dr Greer's energies would be more profitably directed towards seeking to eliminate the anomaly by which modern medicine permits changes of gender, while the law (along, it would seem, with Newnham College statutes) does not.
Roger Machin.
Flat 4,
Tudor Court,
63 Earls Avenue,
Folkestone, Kent CT20 2HA.

SHOULD we infer from Dr Greer's objection that she would welcome applications to the college from prospective students and fellows who are now living happily and succesfully as men, having changed their gender from the female one?
Andrew Cope.
190a Lower Morden Lane,
Morden,
Surrey SM4 4SS.



G7 leaders skirt the issues

DENYING women the right to wear trousers not only keeps them in their place but also places practical restrictions (X-rated opinions, June 24). It is astonishing therefore that there are still schools that forbid girls to wear trousers. Until this rule is removed, we will not have a society that values women as equals.
Polly Bird.
1 Downswood Court,
Abbots Park, Chester CH1 4BF.

I'M NOT at all interested in when we are going to see the present G7 leaders lining up in skirts. Rather, when are we going to see G7 leaders' husbands posing for a jolly photocall before a chatty lunch? That *would* be a turning point.
Sarah Cawkwell.
32 Highbury Hill,
London N5 1AL.

CONVENTIONAL dress codes don't exist only to keep women in their place. What would happen if a male QC, teacher, policeman, Tony Blair or Bill Clinton turned up for work in a skirt?
Harry Dixon.
1 Kellway,
Rainford,
St Helens WA11 8AX.

Stub it out

IT is irresponsible and nonsensical for the British Medical Association to call for health authorities to sue tobacco manufacturers so that the treatment given to those suffering from smoking-related diseases may be funded. This line of thought cannot be justified and thus should be completely ignored.

Why has there been no concomitant call for alcohol brewers to be sued in order to fund treatment, for example, for cirrhosis of the liver? Is litigation to be commenced against vehicle manufacturers to assist the many who find themselves in hospital as a result of road accidents?

Surely it would be wiser to use some of the phenomenal revenue from the sale of tobacco products to aid healthcare in this area? Unlike the BMA's advice, this proposal is not a non-sequitur. Let us hope in future the BMA cogitates correctly.
Christopher Bleakley.
30 Ashenhurst Court,
Bracknell Drive,
Manchester M9 8HF.

Act two

I WAS not surprised your correspondents (Letters, June 21) were upset by my quote "you want the right people to come" to the Royal Opera House. So was I: you had removed a key point. The ROH functions in a market economy. Our performances are on sale at a wide range of prices, many of them comparable to West End musicals or cinemas. Some can afford our current top price for opera of £125, others at the same performance can only afford £6, the lowest. The point I was making was that any price reductions we make are part of a coherent audience-development policy. It is important that if we lower ticket prices, these reductions reach the right people.
Keith Cooper.
Director of corporate affairs.
Royal Opera House,
Covent Garden,
London WC2E 9DD.

Please include a full postal address with letters. We may edit them: shorter ones are more likely to appear.

Tatchell on sex with children

ROS Coward (Why Dares to Speak says nothing useful, June 23) thinks it is "shocking" that Gay Men's Press has published a book, Dares To Speak, which challenges the assumption that all sex involving children and adults is abusive. I think it is courageous.

The distinguished psychologists and anthropologists cited in this book deserve to be heard. Offering a rational, informed perspective on sexual relations between younger and older people, they document examples of societies where consenting inter-generational sex is considered normal, beneficial and enjoyable by old and young alike.

Prof Gilbert Herdt points to the Sambia tribe of Papua New Guinea, where all young boys have sex with older warriors as part of their initiation into manhood. Far from being harmed, Prof Herdt says the boys grow up to be happy, well-adjusted husbands and fathers.

The positive nature of some child-adult sexual relationships is not confined to non-Western cultures. Several of my friends — gay and straight, male and female — had sex with adults from the ages of nine to 13. None feel they were abused. All say it was their conscious choice and gave them great joy.

While it may be impossible to condone paedophilia, it is time society acknowledged the truth that not all sex involving children is unwanted, abusive and harmful.
Peter Tatchell.
Rockingham Street,
London SE1.

Family values

IN the past, Conservatives have been very vocal in stating that children need fathers. Now Cecil Parkinson is chairman of the Conservative Party. What will the party think of a father who never sees his child (Wheen's World, June 25)?
David Baxter.
22 Balmoral Close,
Billericay, Essex CM11 2LL.

A Country Diary

WITTON-LE-WEAR, Co Durham: Spectacular genitals confirmed the insect's identity — improbably large, scarlet, curled over its back like a scorpion's tail and equipped with a formidable claw: it could only be a scorpionfly. This afternoon's humid, overcast conditions were perfect for scorpionfly courtship — a tricky operation made easier by the male's use of its clawed genitals for grasping a mate while he diverts her attention with a meal of regurgitated saliva. This bizarre insect is the latest colonist of a small island, here in the middle of the River Wear, that I've been watching since it first appeared after a flood almost a decade ago. When the water subsided the main current had changed course, as it must have done countless times in the past, leaving an island of coarse gravel just 20 yards long and a few inches above the surface. Within a year root systems of water mint, monkey flower, colt's-foot, creeping thistle and horsetails had begun to bind and stabilise the stones. Every successive flood left a layer of mud between the gravel, providing a seed bed for plants that trapped more particles and pebbles from floodwater. Now the island has grown to half an acre and today's quick survey revealed over 80 different plant inhabitants. Upstream, where the island takes the full force of winter floods, pioneering colonisers still struggle for a foothold on bare gravel. Downstream a rising layer of fertile silt is developing a meadow flora of crane's-bill, yellow rattle, meadow vetchling, purple vetch, meadowsweet and perforated St John's wort. This lush vegetation teems with insect life — damsel flies, mayflies, stoneflies, alderflies and now scorpionflies. Sooner or later another major flood will alter the course of the river again and wash all this away, but for now this evolving island grows more fascinating with every passing year.

PHIL GATES

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Diary

Matthew Norman

IF anyone about to fly from Heathrow wishes to send a small gift after reading what follows, I will not argue — for this is a scam of sublime simplicity. In a lunatic attempt to overcome sterling's buoyancy and stay competitive with foreign traders, Heathrow's duty-free shops are offering travellers generous exchange rates for some currencies. With Deutschmarks, the Economist reports, the nominal rate is DM2.5 to the pound, rather than the true rate of almost 2.9: a bottle of Scotch priced at £10 costs DM25 rather than DM29. That saving is a small benefit, but the beauty of the deal is that change is given in sterling. So anyone who pays with a DM200 note gets back about £70 — a few pounds more than DM200 is worth at the real rate of exchange — along with a free bottle of whisky. It will be fascinating to note how long the scheme survives from today, but anyone who does benefit (and regular travellers could do very nicely) is welcome to thank Fleet Street's most corrupt column in whatever way they choose (no coins).

AND so to the letters of Helen Brinton, android MP for Peterborough. Today's extract comes from missive sent in 1990 by Labour's then prospective parliamentary candidate for Faversham to a senior member of the local party. Helen has just come back from a meeting with employment spokesman Mr Tony Blair, and is flushed with success. She asked two questions, and "then on to the buffet and booze (need to be dignified now and let them come to *me*). I decided *not* to rush up to Tony B; didn't need to; he made a beeline!! We absolutely hit it off. As in house on fire. His words: 'It is so great to meet a PPC of such *quality*. I'm really looking forward to working with you in the House!' " Ah, such prophetic words. Tomorrow, Helen further congratulates herself, and gives her verdict on a fellow PPC.

ON the 12th floor of Canary Wharf, Telegraph newspaper librarians consider selling tickets to an entrancing new sideshow. There, side by side in the corner, are our old friends the Hamiltons. Bless their hearts, the Hammies have been there most of the week, ploughing through cuttings files in research for what is vaguely described as "a book on women". Regardless of whether Christine's role model Sheri Lewis (erstwhile senior partner of Lamb Chop) is featured, we deplore the rudeness of Telegraph staff — senior journalists, alas, bracketed together with young 'uns — seen wandering round the library ostentatiously holding their noses. Poor show.

A BOOST for the motoring industry comes from Vienna, where British cars are [illegible] again, for the first time since the 1960s, the trendiest things on four wheels. Or rather three. Cosmopolitan relates that, rather than go for Jags or anything naff like that, the Viennese have become besotted with the Reliant Robin, and whizz around the boulevards in them without pause. Hopes that they might also be prepared to take Jasper Carrott have yet to be realised.

I AM intrigued by a rumour that Peter Stothard, the editor of the Times, is being considered for the post of ambassador to America. According to a source at the Times, it is this possibility which explains Mr Murdoch's renewed interest in Paul Dacre, the mannerly Daily Mail editor whose habit of digging his nails into his back makes him an unlikely ambassador to anywhere but Sketchleyland. Stodgers rushed over to New York at the weekend to see Mr Tony Blair at the Harry and Tina buffet, but the two are already acquainted: it was he who sold the Blairs the Richmond Crescent house they have just sold for such a splendid profit.

I AM shocked to learn of the nickname given to Newnham College, home of the diverting sex-changedon argument, by sniggerers at Cambridge's male-dominated high tables. It is the Virgin Megastore.

Democracy – the ultimate NI weapon

Commentary

Hugo Young

SINN FEIN, on the face of it, had reason to believe its political position had been strengthened by events last month and this. Some of its people thought their leverage was improved. The Orange veto, exercised through a weak Conservative government, was removed by the Labour landslide. The party itself secured two seats in the election, enabling the leaders to talk, with whatever hyperbole, about their "mandate". Then, in Dublin, a new government assembled around Fianna Fail, the party with the closest tribal affinities in an incorrigibly tribal land.

There were also thoughts that the Labour Government would be more amenable to the Republican objective. Labour's last Northern Ireland secretary, Roy Mason, is widely remembered as the most obdurate holder of the office since the new troubles began, 30 years ago. Unionists still revere him. But New Labour, with its appetite for breakthroughs and its continuing strand of all-Ireland empathy, might be expected to shift the prevailing nuances in Sinn Fein's direction.

Such prophecies have been proved wholly in error. Far from Sinn Fein being in any way embraced, recent events have exposed the party as ever more isolated. This was the context in which the Prime Minister made his statement yesterday, which used the post-election state of politics for the purpose of renewing the momentum behind the policy that John Major, in his constructive phase, began. It's the only policy a British government can sensibly conduct. What it becomes, in Blair's hands, is not a test of originality but of renewal.

What he has done so far is the work of a very reasonable politician. Every stand he has taken reeks of the most obvious good-sense, sweeping aside the obfuscations, the encrusted complexities, the impossibilist scenarios with which all concerned have, for so long, felt obliged to freight the uniquely mesmerising problems of Northern Ireland.

His opening move was to fly to Belfast and assert the primacy of consent, while offering the prognostic that such consent would not yield a united Ireland in his life-time. This was the abandonment of an old shibboleth, and was accounted, on those grounds, daringly pro-Unionist. It was a terribly abrupt thing to say, to politicians whose own linguistic absolutism does not easily tolerate other people's. But it cleared the air of a notion that was probably more futile, and certainly more damaging, than Clause Four. Blair was telling Sinn Fein to abandon its illusions.

His next move was equally straightforward in the opposite direction: to resume exploratory conversations at official level with Sinn Fein, with a view to re-launching the search for a permanent peace. This was an obvious initiative, but then it was followed by another, which was less obvious and would not have been contemplated by his predecessor.

In alliance with Dublin, Blair refused to let the killing of two policemen in Lurgan kill off the process, and in so doing he asserted the supremacy of his own political strength over that of the IRA. Even if John Major had wanted to do that, his political weakness would have made it impossible.

So Lurgan, from being an obscenity designed to enhance IRA/Sinn Fein, adds to their isolation. Every half-friend they ever had has rejected them in favour of the orthodox politics which the new regime has the power to conduct. In particular, the US position, swayed by a British leader to whom the Clinton people can unambiguously relate, is more hostile to Sinn Fein than it has been for years. In Dublin, politicians of every stripe line up in more unanimous condemnation than they have assembled before.

The election, moreover, has recruited another ally to the logic of Blair's resuscitation of parallel de-commissioning, the arms policy which Patrick Mayhew eased the reluctant Tories into. Although David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader, offered some sceptical rumbles yesterday, he assented to be part of the critical mass that Blair is assembling behind the timetabled policy which he most earnestly lays down. Liberated from the Paisley menace, having survived the threat of him on May 1, Trimble can afford to be a little more relaxed in the cause of a process that stands just a chance of becoming the mainstream politics of Ulster.

What we have is a new politician, addressing this old, impenetrable problem with the assistance of a mandate for renewal, and using the fairly massive political energy at his command. All is as the books of democracy say it should be, further assisted by the welcome decision of the Hague Conservatives yesterday not to use Ulster as their first field of experiment in hard-line right-wingery. Will it work?

In Ulster, logic and reason are quite unlikely to be enough. They never have been before. Blair has already learned that he faces the kind of enemy which nothing in his make-up prepares him for. He was, I understand, quite joltingly shocked by the Lurgan killings, coming three days after what he rightly regarded as a gesture of openness and explanation to Sinn Fein, in the form of written undertakings about the state of play between them, such as more case-hardened British governments have previously tended to rate less highly than the mire of ambiguity. Moving out of the seminar-rooms of Opposition, in which the political culture of Northern Ireland abounds, a leader discovers harsh realities.

What perhaps Blair has alongside his relentless logic, however, is a rare opportunity to mobilise popular power. The option for Sinn Fein to disengage from the provisional IRA, and become a credibly political organisation, has seldom pressed upon it more starkly.

To this end, it's regrettable that the Blair people didn't have their feet firmly enough under the table, in the early days of power, to let Messrs Adams and McGuinness make a base in the Palace of Westminster. If politics is to be Ulster's salvation, it's crazy to scorn elected politicians, one of whom remains, however unappealing he often sounds to the English, the best hope for peace rather than war in the councils of Sinn Fein.

Nothing of real permanence can occur until Sinn Fein makes that choice. The best one can say is that this is a moment when the objective circumstances crowd crushingly in. It is not impossible to reach a negotiated framework for a political settlement in Northern Ireland, in which the voice of the people, expressed through a referendum, consigns Sinn Fein to the margin.

That's the political force Blair is trying, with all due haste, to mobilise. It's the weapon of democracy: a long shot, but one a new leader cannot but believe in.

Please cut out the contempt for Croydon

David McKie

I KNOW this may sound perverse, but I rather like Croydon. Yes, that's Croydon, Surrey, the town with all those domineering concrete slabs from the 1960s, and a dual carriageway screaming right through the middle, and all the infrastructural paraphernalia of an era when planners decreed that traffic should inherit the Earth, while pedestrians must slink through squalid subways beneath it. A joke town, like Basingstoke, Wigan, Surbiton, Milton Keynes. A place that civilised people sneer at.

That's certainly what they did on Radio 5 on Tuesday morning, reporting on Croydon's plans to refurbish its image. Croydon, they groaned: the sort of town that gives even Gornji Vakuf a good name. Most famous products of Croydon? Kate Moss, Peggy Ashcroft, Captain Sensible. (Perhaps they're too young to have heard of David Lean.) What chortling there was over the office block near East Croydon station which looks like a pile of threepenny bits!

It's not a town you would ever mistake for Athens. Yet look what, as if in recompense for past obeisance to the motor car, they have done to North End, the principal shopping street. The traffic's been banished. On a Saturday morning it is full of gossiping groups, punctuated by street entertainers you actually want to stop and listen to. (They have all been auditioned.) The first shopping precinct in Croydon was a failure, except as a wind tunnel, till they put a roof on it; but the Whitgift Centre looks better and works better than any other such mall I have met across the nation. You have only to watch the eager faces of shoppers as they hurry out of the car parks to see how much people enjoy it.

Of course there are problems: if there weren't they wouldn't have needed a Croydon Partnership, linking the Labour council with local business and voluntary organisations, to superintend the project, or a Croydon Marketing and Development Ltd under chief executive Jan Grasty, who has lived in Croydon most of her life, to push it through.

The council had hatched an ambitious economic development plan, but local businesses feared that it wouldn't work unless something was done to improve Croydon's image and give it a greater sense of identity. Yet much of the knocking seems to come from those who only know part of Croydon, or have never been there at all.

Croydon is England's eighth-biggest city, bigger than Bradford or Nottingham. It has wonderful parks. Drive east on the Addington Road: first there's Loyd Park, expansive and and lovingly manicured; then Coombe Wood, for the flowers, with a little café kept by a Chinese couple who tot up your bill on an abacus; then Addington Hills, with meadowland and wandering tracks and wide-screen views — from Windsor Castle to Epping Forest and on to Canary Wharf on a better day than yesterday.

Croydon has recently opened a dream of a public library, with an art-house cinema, galleries, museum and café. Across hideous Wellesley Road are the Fairfield Halls and Ashcroft Theatre, with the Warehouse round the next corner. A vibrant night life — restaurants, clubs — is developing. There's also a Premier League football club (for the moment) in Crystal Palace — plus Wimbledon, who are lodgers. Now they are building a tramway, much of it on track isolated from traffic, linking the city quickly and cleanly with enchantments like Wimbledon and Beckenham.

What they have to do now is to capture again the spirit which lit up Croydon in the late Victorian era, when the town won an old and wearisome battle for borough status. The annual Ward's Croydon Directory, which for years had begun with the sentence: "Croydon is a town of great antiquity", caught the belief in progress which swept through the town in those days. "*Besides possessing other and more legitimate claims to importance*, Croydon is a town of great antiquity," it said from then on. Recapturing that sense of progressive independence is especially hard for place like Croydon, a city within a city.

TOWNS thrive better when clearly defined and self-contained, as Croydon still was in the 1880s. "Croydon" — its Mayor-presumptive claimed when the borough charter arrived — "is as old as the metropolis itself, and can boast of a history and local traditions as old as the City of London." In that sense, today's skyscape of concrete slabs may be a blessing, helping establish that Croydon is somewhere different, not just part of the sprawling mass which is Greater London.

At the launch on Monday the council leader, Valerie Shallcross, quoted the Athenian citizen's pledge: "We have to leave the city more beautiful than we find it." But you have to work with what you have got. Croydon can be enhanced, but it can't be radically changed from the pattern set in the 1960s. Though some of the concrete blocks, 30 years on, are doomed to come down, most will stay.

Croydon plans to floodlight them nightly, parade them as an attraction, local excitement. Radio 5 may sneer, but Croydonians should be proud.

It's obvious from the Aitken case, argues **Alan Rusbridger**, that Britain's libel laws urgently need radical reform, so they can't be abused by powerful fraudsters

Burdened with proof

A STRANGE silence has fallen over The Friends of Jonathan Aitken. The voices which crowded the airwaves two years ago to savage the Guardian are suddenly quiet. Only dear old Paul Johnson — who never once turned up in court and who has never sought evidence which might conflict with his pathological prejudices — still stumbles on in blind, splenetic faith.

The Friends should probably be left in peace to come to terms with their personal betrayal. But we should not forget their chorus of vitriol at the time their fallen hero first brandished his rusty sword of truth. We should not forget the Archie Hamiltons, Bernard Inghams and Roger Gales who once tripped over themselves to condemn an overwheening press and demand further, draconian restrictions on its freedom.

We shouldn't forget them, because there can't be much doubt that their chorus contributed to the mood of debate as a potentially helpful Defamation Bill wound its way through Parliament last year. MP after MP and peer after peer denounced the media and killed any radical amendments which would have enabled serious newspapers to do an unencumbered job of reporting areas of proper public concern.

That was the backcloth against which the judge and the Court of Appeal acceded to Aitken's request to get rid of a jury. We can now see that ploy for what it was: the con-trick of a man intending to lie on oath, who wanted to engineer the most favourable audience for his lies. One hopes that the learned judges who soberly agreed with this gambit now feel a twinge of unease.

This is not triumphalist rubbing of salt into open wounds. It is a reminder of what actually happens when newspapers risk a very great deal to draw attention to misdeeds in public life. The number of people who come to their help at the time — be they politicians, judges or even fellow journalists — is very limited. The heat of the battle is usually forgotten in the resounding applause that greets the victory.

The Friends now sit in clubland shaking their hands and asking: "How on earth did Jonathan think he would get away with it?" The answer is very simple. Our libel laws are almost perfectly designed to protect a powerful person with a modest talent for the plausible lie. For a man in serious trouble, it was worth the gamble.

Aitken vs Guardian Newspapers and Granada TV is almost an object lesson in how the odds favour a powerful fraudster, but there are plenty of others. Another example was unmasked this week with the revelation of how Bob Boothby — aided by a future Labour Lord Chancellor, Gerald Gardiner QC, and Arnold Goodman — took the equivalent of £500,000 off the Sunday Mirror by the simple expedient of lying. An earlier example was the way in which Aneurin Bevan, Morgan Phillips, and Richard Crossman lied on oath to get damages off the Spectator — again with the help of Goodman.

In America and many other countries the Aitken case would probably never have come to court, because their laws are framed to encourage, rather than discourage, newspapers in the exercise of fair scrutiny of people who choose to go into public life, with all its privileges and responsibilities. Under these laws, Aitken would have had to prove malice or recklessness before being able to launch an action. That is precisely what he did originally claim — only to drop it midway through the interlocutory hearings.

It is high time that some form of such a public figure/public interest defence was enshrined in our libel law. But there is another crucial difference between the American and the English laws. In America, it would have been up to Aitken to prove the story of the Ritz was *untrue*. In Britain, it was up to the Guardian to prove the story was true. That reverse burden of proof is unique in English civil law and is viewed with some astonishment by other countries with a better-developed sense of how free speech is best protected.

If Aitken had been telling the truth, it would have been an easy matter for him to prove that we were wrong. He would have had access to all the necessary credit-card data, booking forms, bank accounts and hotel receipts to show that he and his family were where they said they were. The Guardian would have been dead in the water.

CONSIDER how nearly Aitken got away with his lie under the present law. The one thing we were sure of was that he was lying. Proving it to the satisfaction of a judge sitting alone was a different matter. In the end, Aitken was only nailed through an extraordinary paper chase as we tried to reconstruct the movements of three people one weekend nearly four years ago.

Aitken's story depended on his wife, Lolicia, being in Paris on the Sunday at lunchtime to pay his bill. Unpicking that story depended on identifying and demanding on subpoena telephone logs, hotel bills, receipts and credit-card records — many of them abroad, and thus beyond any jurisdiction. The great breakthrough came about through pure chance. In order to disprove Aitken's mother-in-law defence, we had to get Mrs Aitken's bill from the Hotel Bristol in Geneva. But why would any foreign hotel want to hand over records to a newspaper which might incriminate a client? By an extraordinary stroke of luck, the hotel turned out to be in receivership, with a caretaker happy for our reporter to look through the records.

That bill blew the mother-in-law defence apart and also led us to the Amex bill (concealed by Aitken), the car-hire agreement and the BA air tickets. If Lolicia had flown Swissair we would still have been in the dark. The clinching evidence arrived just 16 hours before 17-year-old Victoria Aitken was due in the witness box to perjure herself on her father's behalf.

Is it any wonder, in the light of that chapter of accidents and coincidences, that Aitken thought he would get away with it? It would be hard to devise a process to make it more difficult or more expensive for a newspaper to get the evidence to prove its case. The whole system is the greatest possible disincentive for any editor to print a story about a dishonest public figure which they believe to be true. Why risk it, when it could cost millions of pounds if — through bad luck or lack of resources — they failed to find conclusive proof?

A number of distinguished libel barristers, from Desmond Browne QC to Anthony Lester QC and Geoffrey Robertson QC, believe that the burden of proof should be shifted to the plaintiff. Lord Lester points out that we have inherited a law which derives from sedition and the Star Chamber, which held that all libels — true or not — tended to cause a breach of the peace.

Lord Keith of Kinkel appreciated the problem for newspapers when he gave his 1992 judgment in *Derbyshire CC vs Times Newspapers*. He said: "Quite often the facts which would justify a defamatory publication are known to be true, but admissible evidence capable of proving those facts is not available. This may prevent the publication of matters which it is very desirable to make public."

KEITH'S words are a precise description of the Guardian's predicament over Aitken. A leading academic lawyer, Professor Eric Barendt, of University College, London, argues that Keith's remarks "provide a powerful argument for reversing the presumption of falsity in defamation actions, at least in actions brought by public officials and politicians".

This may seem like an obscure piece of special pleading over an arcane aspect of the libel laws. It is, I hope, more than that. If newspapers are right to expose dishonest men at the heart of government — and no-one (bar Paul Johnson) now suggests the Guardian was wrong — then they need practical help.

A Labour government committed to reforming the cosy and ineffective codes governing life at Westminster ought — in the wake of Smith, Hamilton and Aitken — to acknowledge the honourable role that the media have in acting as a watchdog. Most other western countries are now far ahead of Britain in rebalancing their information and defamation laws. They do not have newspapers which are markedly less responsible than ours as a result. Is it not time to catch up?

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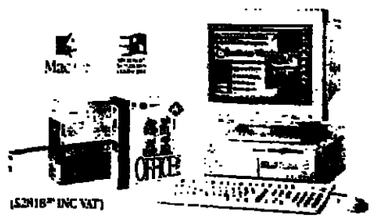

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Jacques-Yves Cousteau

Voyager beneath the silent oceans

He called himself the world's first astronaut of inner space and went on to reveal the fragile elegance and vulnerability of life in the seas

EVERYONE seems to carry favourite images of Jacques-Yves Cousteau, who has died aged 87. The lined face, the red woolly hat, the lean, leathery man of the sea at the helm of Calypso: the persuasive adventurer with a strangely sad voice, luring viewers into the wonder of undersea life; the assured, even arrogant, commercial entrepreneur; the television innovator; the environmentalist, prompting the world's leaders to take responsibility for the future of the planet; the creator of the Monaco Oceanographic Institute and of enthusiastic marine life societies in France and North America, all marching to the Cousteau drum.

Yet, even collectively, these provide only facets of Cousteau the persona, the media personality, rather than of Jacques-Yves himself. For the adventurous Captain — or Commander (Legion d'Honneur) as he later became — was a private man who rarely revealed his deepest thoughts or his real hopes and purposes.

Brushing with death many times, he carried a lifelong regret that he never achieved his early ambition to become a stunt pilot. This was mainly because of physical problems and injury, sustained in the thirties, when he barely survived a car crash. Had the medics had their way, his most damaged arm would have been amputated. He fought them off and learned to use his arms again by swimming and, later, by diving.

Freed by the neutral buoyancy of his aqua-lung (perfected with Emile Gagnan and patented) Cousteau declared himself to be the world's first astronaut of inner space. He went on to open the world's eyes to the great richness, fragile elegance and vulnerability of life in the seas. He did more than any other to open these sensitive regions up to a sometimes damaging human invasion.

But, as Cousteau would say with a sharp look, the real damage is being done by pollution, dumping, trawling and mechanised physical disruption. "Many ecologists and oceanographers believe that there is no hope for undersea life: I am not so pessimistic."

Cousteau never whole-heartedly embraced the cause of environmental science and towards the end of his life, in spite of having founded underwater archaeology as a serious science, professional oceanographers tended to regard him largely as a showman. In spite of his work in sea-bed laboratories, marine ecologists saw him as an exploiter. Many serious environmental scientists were never fully convinced that he shared their values and purposes.

Yet the opening sequence of *The Silent World*, with the torches of its undersea explorers descending into the blackness of the deep — filmed by Cousteau in 1956 and a winner of the Cannes Grand Prix — was a profound and beautiful revelation.

It was an experience of such deep inner spirituality that it seemed almost religious. A beacon of enormous power for good was switched on — an event that belongs to Jacques-Yves because, without his daring and creativity, it would not have happened. Yet the beacon has somehow never focused critically on the environmental insensitivities of politics and commerce.

For more than three decades, Cousteau's personal fame opened the doors to political and industrial leaders throughout the world. He often spoke of the problems and pressures on marine life, but he never rallied public pressure. Cousteau was always moving on to new ideas, to the next project, film, location.

IN THIS, perhaps, he was no more than a realist. Once the international enterprises were dealing in marine equipment and in promotion, they took the helm. Cousteau often emphasised that he was self-financing, although there were times when he accepted support for his films and television adventures.

For most of the 100 films he conceived, photographed and directed and for his television documentaries and the many research and underwater series — he more than paid his own way. He was driven by his own absolute delight in the wonders of nature and the need to record them before they were degraded or destroyed.

A man in his element . . . 'I was instantly entranced by what lay beneath the opacity of the surface.' Jacques-Yves Cousteau in his diving vessel, Sea Flea PHOTOGRAPH: FLIP SCHULKE

Jacques-Yves revelled in his gifts for innovation, and in the excitement of dreaming up new visualisations of reality, which he would then transform into a form in which they could be widely shared. Somehow he managed to retain the wonder and curiosity of a child, combining it with the skills of an innovative engineer.

Even when the acumen of the entrepreneur was uppermost, he remained charming and entertaining.

Some of this is in his background. Jacques-Yves was the third son of a lawyer who, before the first world war, worked for an American francophile millionaire and, after that war, for "the richest and handsomest unmarried New Yorker". Jacques's mother came from a long established family of wine merchants.

The Cousteau family travelled widely at a time when, as Jacques-Yves recalled, "travelling was not easy". But the children were brought up in an environment in which large yachts and long journeys were the norm. Cousteau's earliest memories were dominated by a fascination for the sea. He was neither as strong nor as athletic as his two brothers and was never academically inclined.

He learnt to swim and dive and, by 20, he had overcome his initial physical disadvantages. His car accident led to further serious therapeutic swimming, to the wearing of pearl diver's goggles — and his first realisation of the hidden richness of underwater life. "Few men know what shapes their lives. But I was instantly dazzled, entranced, by what lay beneath the opacity of the surface," he wrote.

That he chose to train as an engineer and enter the French Navy seems inevitable. Underwater photography became almost an obsession, shared by Simone Melchior, the daughter of a wealthy family, whom he married in 1937.

The second world war found him trapped in Toulon as gunnery officer, leaving him relatively free to investigate scuba-diving. His main concern was to develop equipment that would allow camera-bearing "menfish" to move freely underwater for substantial periods of time.

Existing compressed air systems were poor and hazardous. Cousteau developed an oxygen rebreathing system, but after two nearly fatal accidents abandoned the idea. His experiments with flexible pipes and air pumped from the surface were no less dangerous and it was not until he met Emile Gagnan in 1942, that the aqua-lung began to take shape.

Gagnan had invented a compact valve for engines which, during the war, ran on synthesis gas.

Using this, which, after dangerous underwater acrobatics, resulted in a balanced neutral buoyancy with uniform gas flow whatever the diver's attitude and depth, the pair produced a novel back-pack and mask.

Cousteau dived to 60 feet for several minutes in 1943 and the era of the aqua-lung was born. The design became standard. In 1945 these activities led to the establishment of the French Navy's Underwater Research Group with Cousteau as its commanding officer.

During the war the activities also served as a cover for intelligence and resistance operations. Among his single-handed sorties, Jacques-Yves entered the Axis Naval HQ at Toulon, where he photographed secret documents including the code book — material later of substantial value to the Allies. But Jacques's brother, Pierre, who had leaned ever more to the right, was appointed as puppet editor-in-chief of Paris Soir and, after VE day, was named as a collaborator. He escaped to Italy and assumed a false name. Jacques-Yves got travel documents for Pierre and his family and tried to persuade them to escape through Spain.

To the life-long regret of Jacques, Pierre refused. He was tried as a collaborator and sentenced to death. His wife campaigned against the penalty and eventually, the court commuted the sentence. She died soon afterwards from a brain tumour; Pierre, released after 12 years, died early of cancer.

These tragedies lay in the background as Jacques-Yves led the Underwater Research Group, dealt with mines, invented underwater lighting of unprecedented power and developed techniques for colour cine photography.

Two decades later, his own family encountered tragedy as his son Philippe, an accomplished flyer, began to take over the Cousteau enterprises in the 1970s, making great use of an old Catalina flying boat — the Flying Calypso — as a platform for expeditions and photography. Returning from a test flight in 1979, the aircraft inexplicably broke up on landing and Philippe was killed.

Cousteau became increasingly dependent on the great organising abilities of his surviving son, Jean-Michel, in maintaining the Cousteau image.

There was growing public criticism of the almost circus-like nature of the later expeditions, of the abuse of marine mammals and exploitation of primitive people.

Cousteau repudiated all criticism. He always wrote books about his films and journeys, but in the 1980s began to assemble huge tomes, collections of impressions and warnings, environmental information, folklore, futuristic ideas, typified by the *Cousteau Almanac*. His writing could be highly emotive but did not satisfy him: "I want to write the music for my films" — as he could have done — he played the piano well.

His wife Simone died in 1990 and in 1992 he married Francine Triplet. Yet he had written that adventurers should never marry, for they cannot devote enough time to family responsibilities. He also said that, whenever he met people who were very serious about their work, he would burst into laughter.

Anthony Tucker

Jacques-Yves Cousteau, oceanographer, born June 11, 1910; died June 25, 1997

Birthdays

Claudio Abbado, conductor, 64; **June Bridgeman**, former deputy chair, Equal Opportunities Commission, 65; **Hugues Cuenod**, tenor, 96; **Georgie Fame**, singer, 54; **Dr Alexander Fenton**, ethnologist, 68; **Donald Johnston**, secretary-general, OECD, 61; **Prof Ruth Kempson**, linguist, 53; **Syd Lawrence**, bandleader, 73; **Gordon McQueen**, footballer, 45; **Prof Sir Alan Peacock**, economist, 75; **Nicholas Polunin**, environmentalist, author, 88; **Emma Porteous**, costume designer, 61; **Lord Rawlinson, QC**, former Conservative Attorney-General, 78; **Philip Sawford**, Labour MP, 47; **Philippe Streiff**, racing driver, 42; **Colin Wilson**, author, 66; **Marta Zabaleta-Hinrichsen**, writer, economist, anthropologist, 60.

Sue Sumii

Saga of 'village people'

SUE Sumii, who has died aged 95, was a best-selling novelist and a celebrated campaigner for the rights of Japan's oppressed minorities. Her life work, *The River With No Bridge*, is the saga of a family, a kind of *Roots* of Japan, but a highly politicised one. The first seven volumes sold 8.3 million copies. Sumii was working on the eighth when she died. The book was made into two films and the first volume has been translated into English.

The first part of *The River With No Bridge* was published in 1961 and was highly controversial in its time. It is the story of a *burakumin* family in a village in the Nara area, where Sumii grew up. To this day the Japanese prefer to avoid talking about the *burakumin* (the word is a euphemism meaning "village people"). For centuries these people were treated as untouchables, not for their race — they are pure Japanese — but because of the work they did. They were butchers, leatherworkers and undertakers, jobs which other Japanese rejected as "defiling", and were known as *eta* meaning "much filth".

The River With No Bridge documents in fictional form the hardships of growing up as a *burakumin* between 1908 and 1924. Koji, the youngest child, encounters daily prejudice at school; other children refuse to share the communal water bucket with him for fear of contamination. Firemen refuse to enter a *burakumin* area, so the family house burns down.

It is a harrowing story. But as the boys grow up, they begin to see their *burakumin* status as a badge of pride. One joins the Levellers, a *burakumin* liberation organisation founded in 1922. He is imprisoned and unable to attend his own wedding. Stubbornly, his wife-to-be takes the vows next to a screen bearing the Levellers' declaration: "In recompense for their work in skinning animals, they were skinned alive . . . We who have been born of this blood are trying to become human. It is time we should be proud of *eta*."

Celebrated . . . Sue Sumii

Sumii's novel inspired several protest movements among the *burakumin* and, particularly when the book was made into a film, forced the issue into the forefront of public debate. She herself was not a *burakumin*, but was horrified by the ill-treatment which she saw around her.

Sumii became a writer for Kodansha, a leading Japanese publishing house, in 1919 but left a year later in protest against what she saw as discrimination against women workers. She met Shigeru Inuta, a farmer and writer on agrarian themes, and the two formed an agrarian writers' movement. They married in 1921. In the years that followed she raised four children, supported her asthmatic husband and did the farming, while continuing to write.

Her first novels, written under a variety of pen names in her early twenties, were much praised. In 1954 she won the Mainichi Prize, an important literary award. Her husband died in 1957. But it was not until 1961, when she was 59, that the first volume of her celebrated lifework was published to instant acclaim.

Throughout her long life, Sumii was outspoken in her criticism of any kind of discrimination, not only against the *burakumin*. Interviewed in 1992 at the age of 90 on the publication of the seventh volume of *The River With No Bridge*, she told the story of how, when Emperor Meiji came to visit her village in 1908, a farmer scraped out the imperial "sacred" excrement from the lavatory as a souvenir. "I burst out laughing," she said. "The Emperor and I both empty our bowels and I felt relieved to know he and I are both human!"

Lesley Downer

Sue Sumii, writer, born 1902; died June 18, 1997

Death Notices

SKINNER. Jane, aged 47 died peacefully at home in Bournville, Birmingham on Tuesday 24th June in the care of her family and close friends. Much loved mother of Catherine, daughter of Carol and Maurice and sister of Paul. She was a very special person to all who knew and worked with her. She lived through her long illness with remarkable courage. She inspired everyone she worked with, particularly at Selly Oak Colleges and Birmingham Settlement. All who knew Jane will be welcome at a celebration of her life that will take place at Lodge Hill Crematorium, Selly Oak at 1pm on Wednesday 2nd July. Family flowers only please, donations to St Mary's Hospice, 176 Raddlebarn Road, Selly Park, Birmingham B29 7DA.

STRANG. Leonard Bernie, died tragically on Tuesday 24th June. Much loved by family and friends. He will be greatly missed. Funeral service 2.00pm Volx, France

Birthdays

EMAKPOR. To Elstobor and Jacqueline (née Ricketts) a son, Ovie Marcus on 18th June 1997 at St. Mary's hospital, Manchester.

■To place your announcement telephone 0171 713 4567 or fax 0171 713 4129 between 9am and 3pm Mon-Fri.

Jackdaw

Eco-fashion

CAN the fashion-conscious have an eco-conscience? Designer Isaac Mizrahi would probably say yes, given that the dresses in his fall season are accented with recycled furs. So would Giorgio Armani — he created the hemp tux Woody Harrelson wore to this year's Oscars. But pose the question to environmental purists and they'll tell you that, for the most part, the catwalk is a real dog when it comes to eco-friendliness, and if you truly want an outfit that matches your green sensibilities, buy used.

Clothes manufacturing wears on the planet. Twenty five per cent of the insecticides used globally go on cotton plants, grown for the world's most popular fabric. Synthetics, like polyester, are made from petroleum products and are nonbiodegradable. And fabric-finishing processes are highly toxic and polluting.

Mother Jones on how to make your wardrobe enviromentally friendly.

Fool's gold

WHEN hundreds of Britain's airmen and special service troops like the SAS went to war in the Gulf in 1991, they each wore a special money belt next to the skin. In each belt were 20 British gold sovereigns.

Because if you're in trouble in one of the world's wilder places, there's still nothing like a real gold sovereign to win hearts and minds to persuade the locals to guide you back to civilisation. And not just in the wilder places; is there anyone, anywhere, whose heart does not beat a little faster at the thought of a pocket full of jingling gold coins? The sovereign is a coin with a unique place in British history.

The first sovereigns were minted almost exactly 500 years ago, soon after Henry Tudor had defeated Richard III at the battle of Bosworth in 1485. Henry VII, as he later became, was called "the meanest man in Europe" (he took the crown to bed with him, just in case) but, to be fair, he needed to be mean. His country was poor and ravaged by decades of civil war.

How could an obscure Welsh adventurer, who had won the crown in England with his sword, impress the major superpowers such as France and Spain?

The answer is gold. Henry dreamed up a massive gold coin and decided to call it a sovereign. It carried his portrait, and it was worth 20 silver shillings.

Clearly a man who could issue a coin like like that was a king to be reckoned with.

How many shillings to buy a Rolls-Royce? From Queste, the offical Rolls and Bentley magazine.

Soho sisters

THE women . . . in the music of the 1860s, in the cabarets of Berlin in the 1920s, in New York's Bowery, the home of the burlesque which later gave birth to the striptease in the 1930s, in Cairo, the mecca of belly dancing in the Arab world, and more recently in London's Soho, are certainly misplaced objects of feminist sympathy. These are strong, saucy characters who do not let the decadence of their trade affect their personal dignity.

Take Luz do Fuego, born Dora Vivacqua, the Brazilian snake dancer who defied moral opinion by dancing naked in the 1950s. She declared: "women must be financially and emotionally independent. A woman who can look after herself can look after her dreams and can make her ideas happen."

Nickie Roberts, a stripper in Soho throughout the seventies, gives a stark insight into the complicity of the police with the Maltese mafia then controlling Soho's sex industry. She is also an advocate of women's political and sexual rights. She fled her mind-numbing job as a factory worker in Lancashire in 1969. "As far as I was concerned, straight working life was acting like a doormat. So I rebelled and I consider that working as a stripper in the sex industry gave me the chance to leave behind a life sentence in the factories." How can she be a victim, she demands, when "victims can't survive Soho?"

Are you dancing? Literary Review on Stripping: A History of erotic dancing, by Lucinda Jarrett.

A bar a day

MARS: You like to think of yourself as a sporty, active type, anxious to boost your energy while on the run. You hate wasting time and prefer instant satisfaction to instant gratification.

Twix: Once is never enough for you: you think the best things come in pairs. You can be a smooth talker (that's why you like the caramel), but equally you're game for a bit of rough. In truth you're more at home with a cup of tea with your mum.

Flake: You appreciate the finer things in life. One of life's philosophers, you spend hours contemplating your inner child. This leaves little time to express the man within.

Yorkie: A taste for the famous trucker's bar instantly makes you one of the boys. You see yourself as cool, calm and collected, a man who never bites off more than he can chew.

Lion Bar: You're not easy to get to grips with. You live for the moment and grasp every opportunity as it presents itself. You wish you were a wild thing, but at heart you're just a pussy cat.

You are the chocolate bar you eat, according to Esquire.

Evolved ... with Ethos

Cyber dentist

CAN'T face a visit to your dentist? Try RK Boyden dentistry, which is a drill-free zone. This friendly dental site invites visitors to pose questions via e-mail to a panel of experts. Current answers cover topics from tongue piercing to swallowing toothpaste, and there's advice on what to do if you're allergic to the latex in the dentist's gloves. You can also view a tooth movie and watch a molar rotate in 3D space.

http://www.catalog.com/cgi-bin/ var/dentist/index.html

.Net

All change

CHANGE is all around us. Some changes are so subtle that we hardly notice them. some are so enormous that we can hardly grasp what their final consequences may be. In this period of great flux, some of us may have started to feel lost or uneasy as all that we have relied on for so long shifts and loses its validity and certainty. Conventional philosophy, science and religion simply do not go far enough.

Increasingly people are looking at the world around them and are concerned by what they see. The approaching millennium seems symbolic of this feeling that the old order is on the way out, to be replaced by the new and the unkown. We may be living through a revolution or an evolution.

Is a change as good as a rest? asks Ethos.

Jackdaw wants jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk.; fax 0171-713 4366; write Jackdaw, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

Hannah Pool

Top director gets off the Direct Line, page 12 Tomorrow: Milton Keynes, best for shopping

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

Brown's pledge for jobless

Bosses back £3bn new deal

Richard Thomas
Economics Correspondent

TOP executives from Britain's leading companies were queuing up yesterday to back the Government's welfare-to-work package, after the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, pledged £3 billion to a "new deal" for the unemployed.

Welcoming bosses from more than 40 blue-chip firms to a breakfast summit with ministers at 11 Downing Street, Mr Brown promised to work with business to "rebuild the welfare state around the work ethic".

He called on the assembled businessmen — including representatives from Abbey National, Asda, Boots, Ford, Sainsbury and Jaguar — to join a "national crusade to deal with what many people see as the threat of an underclass in our society".

The £3 billion, raised by a windfall tax on the privatised utilities due to be unveiled in Wednesday's Budget, will be targeted at 250,000 under-25s who have been out of work for more than six months.

The Chancellor assured the summit that young people who rejected one of the four options — work in the private sector with a £60-a-week subsidy, full-time education or training, volunteer work or time on a new environmental task force — would be dealt with firmly.

"There will be no fifth option for young people, staying at home doing nothing," he said. "We are prepared to be tough where necessary to get young people back into the working environment." Objectors could see their benefits slashed in half, Mr Brown suggested in a BBC interview.

Reacting to corporate concerns about the job-readiness of people in the target group, the Chancellor and David Blunkett, Secretary of State for Education and Employment, announced that all participants would have to pass through an initial "gateway", designed to equip youngsters with basic work and social skills. A £750 training allowance will also be available to help participants gain formal qualifications, and firms hiring older workers who have been jobless for more than two years will be offered a £75-a-week incentive.

Neville Simms, group chief executive at the construction services group Tarmac, said his company would give the Government's initiative its full support.

Stan Mendham, head of the Forum of Private Business, said small firms could also reap some rewards from the programme. "There are problems in the detail," he said, "for example, the fact that people can't get £60 a week to set up their own business — but this is a welcome relief after the arrogance of the last government."

Pilot projects on the new schemes will begin in January, which will then be rolled out nationwide in April, Mr Blunkett said. Ministers are still working on built-in safeguards against employers who take on subsidised workers and fire existing staff.

Sir Peter Davis, chairman of the Prudential Corporation, who is heading up a business advisory taskforce on welfare, said some job losses were inevitable. "Of course we don't want to see this kind of replacement, but in the real world it is bound to happen to some extent. We can't be too dogmatic."

"We need employers to get behind us," Mr Blunkett said. "We ignore at our peril the danger of an excluded generation. Our task is to stop this time bomb ticking now by acting decisively to give hope and independence to those currently dependent on the welfare state."

Labour now owes us, say the young

Richard Thomas talks to the sceptics

THE Government's "welfare to work" breakfast summit in Number 11 yesterday won over some high-powered business doubters. But it will take more than mini Danish pastries to woo the second group of deep sceptics — the young people who are supposed to benefit from the £3 billion package.

"It has been put together by monkeys, people who have never been hungry in their lives," is the verdict of William Craig, 21, currently living in a Camberwell hostel for the homeless. "It's a shambles."

Mr Craig does welcome the fact that the needs of the young unemployed are being recognised, but is afraid the new scheme will fail at the same hurdle as the myriad of previous schemes: low expectations.

"If someone wants to study politics, what is the use of them painting lamp-posts?"

Kenisha McGregor, 18, who lives in the same south London hostel, wants more emphasis on the training element of the programme, rather than the "cheap labour" of the environmental taskforce.

"We need more than NVQs," she says. "Employers want qualifications they can recognise, like A levels and degrees, so six months is just not enough. You need continuous development, not a single dead-end job."

Mr Craig is aggressively aspirational, and demands more. "I had a bad education and I blame the Conservatives," he says. "But the Labour government now owes us something. We are not just going to settle for any old job. We won't be volunteered into it."

He is convinced we will all benefit from a concerted attack on youth unemployment through reduced crime and drug use and welfare spending: "A bright future for us is a bright future for everyone."

Blunkett turns to LSE guru

Charlotte Denny

THE Secretary of State for Education and Employment, David Blunkett, has recruited Professor Richard Layard, a key figure in developing the Government's welfare to work policy, as his top adviser.

Professor Layard's appointment, which is expected to be announced next week, is likely to accelerate moves to a benefit system based on job subsidies and sanctions.

Prof Layard is currently head of the London School of Economics' Centre for Economic Performance which has been a hothouse for new Blairite talent.

Ed Balls and Ed Miliband, aides to Chancellor Gordon Brown, are both alumni. Paul Gregg, another labour market expert, is also tipped for a post in the administration.

Prof Layard along with Professor George Bain — in charge of setting the minimum wage — is one of the few academics appointed to the new administration, with businessmen dominating the new hirings.

Mr Blunkett's high calibre aide made his name in academia with a seminal work on the causes of unemployment. Prof Layard is a long-time advocate of using wage subsidies to encourage employers to take on the long-term unemployed who may otherwise be lost to the labour market.

He is in favour of tighter benefit regimes and limits on the length of time people can claim benefit.

Experts baffled as trade breaks records

Charlotte Denny

BRITAIN'S trade gap with the rest of the world widened last month to nearly £1 billion in April despite a record breaking month for UK exporters.

A pick-up in world trade rescued the exporters from the dampening effects of the rising pound. But rising demand from consumers for overseas goods saw the trade deficit widen to £961 million.

The volume of UK exports in April reached record levels. The value of exports rose by 7.5 per cent to £14.7 billion, according to figures released yesterday by the Office for National Statistics.

Most commentators were baffled by the continuing strength of the export sector. "The record level of exports is hard to reconcile with the strength of sterling and the pessimistic survey evidence," said Simon Briscoe from Nikko Bank.

However, demand for foreign goods pushed imports to a record £15.6 billion. Import volumes rose by 11 per cent compared with March, the biggest monthly rise since November 1981.

Imports from EU countries were particularly high reflecting the strength of sterling compared to most European currencies.

Analysts, who had been expecting the deficit to continue to narrow, said the sharp fall in the oil surplus, from £604 million to £374 million, explained much of the deterioration in the trade balance.

Statisticians at the ONS said the underlying trend in the deficit, which has been narrowing in recent months, had flattened out in April.

The trade deficit for non-EU countries last month also widened from £400 million to £600 million.

Export prices fell by 1 per cent over the month despite sterling's rise, suggesting that most manufacturers are continuing to take a cut on their margins rather than risk losing market share.

Import prices also declined by 1 per cent over the month, the seventh consecutive monthly drop and further good news for inflation.

David Bloom from HSBC markets said the strength of exports suggested that sterling was not depressing the economy's growth as had been expected. He warned that this would put more pressure on the Chancellor to raise taxes on the personal sector in Wednesday's Budget.

New chief executive for Hogg Robinson as it sells its transport businesses

Neville Bain (left), chairman designate of Hogg Robinson, with David Radcliffe, the new chief executive whose appointment was announced yesterday. The businesses services group also announced it would sell its transport businesses PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH

Tally ho as staghounds call in PR boys

Geoffrey Gibbs and Julia Finch

TWO West Country staghunts have called in a top City PR agency in an attempt to have stag hunting excluded if legislation against field sports is implemented.

The Quantock staghounds and the much older Devon and Somerset staghounds are the latest groups to pin their hopes on the public relations men.

The two hunts have called on the persuasive talents of the Luther Pendragon agency, which is based in offices just off Fleet street. The firm — which offers the wisdom of several former senior journalists — regards itself as an "issues management consultancy" and has built up expertise at working for companies facing critical issues.

Its clients range from the UK operations of McDonalds, which has just won the country's longest libel case against two environmentalists, to Barclays Stockbrokers. It also represents United Utilities — the Norweb electricity and North West Water combine.

The company is charging normal fees for its work for the staghounds, which can run into thousands of pounds per month. The hunters will foot the bill from a fighting fund set up with donations from members, who range from landowners to landlords.

The decision to call in a City firm was made in the wake of the National Trust's decision to ban hunting on more than 17,000 acres of its land on Exmoor and the Quantocks two months ago.

The Trust voted for the ban following an independent study by Cambridge animal behaviour expert Professor Patrick Bateson. His report found that hunting with hounds imposed extreme stress and suffering on red deer. The West Country staghounds hope to challenge the report.

But the political mood is also swinging heavily against all forms of hunting with hounds. The Government is unlikely to find time to back a private members bill being brought by Labour MP Mike Foster, but pressure is mounting for a total ban on hunting.

The staghounds hope the PR firm will be able to persuade a doubting non-rural public that the survival of a healthy red deer population is inextricably linked to continuation of hunting.

"It's not easy but that is why they have hired us," said Edward Townsend, the consultant who has taken on the hunting account.

"I believe that everyone with a legitimate case deserves professional representation. Difficult causes are our business and we have the clout to ensure a wider dissemination of the West Country hunts' messages to those in the media, politics and elsewhere who have been deluged with propoganda from the anti-hunt lobby."

Seeking help to blow their horns PHOTOGRAPH: KENNETH SAUNDERS

Ex-staffer at Orange questioned

Dan Atkinson

ORANGE, the mobile-telephone company, was at the centre of a police investigation last night into allegations of impropriety in the award of printing contracts by a former staff member. The company confirmed it had launched civil proceedings against the ex-employee, but would not comment on the police involvement.

Detectives from Avon and Somerset Police arrived yesterday at Orange's Almondsbury head offices near Bristol; five employees have so far been questioned and the police said that the inquiry would take some time.

Orange said it was beginning civil action against a former employee in connection with the handling of printing orders. "Orange is not in a position to discuss the matter until the conclusion of the proceedings. However, Orange can confirm that they do not relate to any existing employee of Orange nor do they have any bearing on Orange's current operations."

Notebook

Halifax moves bank goal-posts

Edited by Alex Brummer

SPECULATION about the future shape of commercial banking in the UK has reached fever pitch. Reports that Barclays has run its slide rule over NatWest has been one source of excitement, closely followed by renewed talk, now denied in Hong Kong, that HSBC is about to make a move on the Royal Bank of Scotland.

At the centre of this activity are two factors: the perceived weakness of NatWest allied to its recent profit warning and the substantial changes in UK retail banking promised by the conversion of mutuals into personal banks.

In a whole range of areas from housing finance to consumer credit, insurance and pensions the clearing banks may find themselves on the back foot as the new personal banks press ahead with expansion plans, unfettered by capital constraints.

The tendency has been to dismiss the possibility of Barclays/NatWest merger as unworkable because of competition considerations, which has led to reports of overseas purchasers. But as far as can be established, the two main continental contenders, ABN Amro and Dresdner Bank of Germany, are not interested.

ABN Amro has enough on its hands bedding down Standard Federal Bancorp of Detroit, bought for $1.95 billion last November while Dresdner has enough retail banking in Germany without worrying about the UK where it has had some difficulties with Kleinwort Benson.

This leaves the UK option. HSBC, because of its size, clearly could move on NatWest — and it is not that preposterous in that it is not so long ago that Lloyds set sights on Midland, the HSBC UK bridgehead. But the feeling within HSBC is that there are certain NatWest businesses in which it might be interested, but not the whole shooting match.

The focus at HSBC at present is sorting out its rapid fire series of Latin American purchases — currently managed from Midland in London — before choosing new targets.

Which leaves Barclays. It is fascinating that Barclays have not taken the opportunity to publicly rubbish the whole NatWest idea. What is recognised by the most senior UK bankers is that the anti-competitive odds in the UK have changed dramatically with the arrival of Halifax et al, which change all the market share calculations.

It is under this rubric that Barclays might be able to go ahead and take out a fair slice of capacity.

This would mean wholesale loss of branches and jobs — after all, the failed Lloyds/Midland link would have taken out 27,000. Lost jobs of up to 40,000 may prove to be the greatest public interest argument against, but with rationalisation already in full swing the timetable may be faster if there were a merger, but the outcome the same.

French fandango

JACQUES de Larosière, the president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, is taking his time over deciding whether or not he wants a second term. Mr de Larosière is regarded as having done a good job and his shareholders have made it clear the post is his for the keeping.

But the decision may be more complicated and have wider ramifications than would be immediately apparent. Top jobs at international financial institutions like the EBRD do not come up that often and when they do competition is fierce.

France has often shown a keeness to have one of its own nationals in prestigious posts of this kind. That is why the French lobbied hard for Jacques Attali to get the EBRD presidency in the first place and, when he fell from grace, they campaigned with equal vigour to get Mr de Larosière chosen as his successor.

Now, however, the French have the top job at another institution in their sights — the head of the planned European central bank.

Until recently, Holland's Wim Duisenberg was regarded as a cert for the ECB job but there are those in France who would like to see such an assumption challenged.

Could it be that Paris would like to see Mr de Larosière stand down at the EBRD to be replaced by Mr Duisenberg? Certainly, that would leave the way open for Paris then to press the case for a French head of the ECB. Michel Camdessus, the long time head of the International Monetary Fund, perhaps?

Spending trap

ALTHOUGH Andrew Dilnot's forceful criticism of the Government's determination to stick with Conservative spending plans is almost certainly too late to have an impact on next week's Budget, it will provide plenty of food for thought for the new Chancellor and his advisers.

In Labour's determination to make no slips in the run up to the election, it committed itself to a public spending straitjacket which many of its supporters feel could be its eventual undoing.

Aside from the tide of spending requests starting to come from the health and education lobbies, Dilnot's Institute for Fiscal Studies' concern is that the loss of real value in health and education — because of self-imposed constraints — will undermine middle-class faith in these services, in much the same way as it diminished in the state pension.

The long-term result will be more opting out to the private sector, which is precisely what Labour hopes to reverse.

Boeing moves to placate EU

Mark Tran in New York

BOEING, the world's leading aircraft manufacturer, yesterday signalled its willingness to ditch its sole-supplier agreements with three US airlines in order to overcome European opposition to its proposed $14 billion acquisition of McDonnell Douglas.

Boeing's apparent readiness to drop the contentious exclusive agreements comes as the European Union prepares to hand down its final verdict on the merger by the end of next month at the latest. EU officials will be delighted if Brussels' firm stance is found to have been vindicated.

While it cannot block the Boeing-McDonnell deal outright, the EU can levy fines on Boeing's operations in Europe. Karel Van Miert, the EU's top antitrust regulator, warned last week that the prospective partners should have no doubt of the European Commission's determination to block the merger if no concessions were made.

Those warnings appear to have struck home. Boeing executives are said be considering a plan to eliminate the company's controversial exclusivity provision with Delta Air Lines, American Airlines and Continental Airlines.

Under that provision, the three carriers have committed themselves to buying only Boeing aircraft for the next 20 years in return for deep discounts.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.18	France 9.39	Italy 2,747	Singapore 2.327
Austria 19.61	Germany 2.7850	Malta 0.62	South Africa 7.29
Belgium 57.54	Greece 442.00	Netherlands 3.1250	Spain 234.00
Canada 2.26	Hong Kong 12.56	New Zealand 2.357	Sweden 12.68
Cyprus 0.8285	India 59.86	Norway 11.73	Switzerland 2.33
Denmark 10.68	Ireland 1.0875	Portugal 281.00	Turkey 234,680
Finland 8.44	Israel 5.85	Saudi Arabia 6.15	USA 1.6300

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).

Granada refuses to up bid for YTT

Lisa Buckingham
City Editor

GERRY Robinson, chairman of Granada, the hotels and media empire, yesterday threw his ambitions to become the most powerful man in British television on the mercy of big shareholders when he refused to increase the £711 million price tag he has put on Yorkshire-Tyne Tees TV.

Despite strong opposition from large investment groups such as Mercury Asset Management, which could threaten the agreed takeover bid, Mr Robinson warned that this was a take-it-or-leave-it offer.

The bid puts a price of £11.75 on each of the YTT shares, which gained 2½p to £11.57½ in the market. "This is an offer that, by comparison with any other [TV bid], is very attractive. It outshines them all and, although there will be some people who've bought into Yorkshire above this price, the average shareholder paid £2."

Mr Robinson, whose recent corporate success has relied on the close support of MAM's Carol Galley, said he had not had representations against the bid from any shareholders, even though investors with about 30 per cent of the shares are believed to think the offer is too low.

Granada already has a 27 per cent shareholding in YTT, whose chairman, Ward Thomas, is expected to chair an enlarged Granada Media Group if the deal goes through. Mr Robinson needs to secure the deal if he is to remain in the race to control the entire ITV network if, as he predicts, the regionally-based system coalesces into one company.

But his ambitions face an early hurdle — not only from the professional investors but also from one of his rivals for the crown at ITV, Lord Hollick, whose United News group runs Anglia and Meridian and sits on a 14.8 per cent stake in Yorkshire.

Lord Hollick was unavailable to comment on whether he will support the bid, which would give him a £55.5 million profit on the stake, which his company acquired just over two years ago for about £41 million.

Yorkshire's Mr Thomas said he had no idea whether Lord Hollick was thinking of launching a rival bid, but thought HTV was a more likely target. And the septuagenarian, who was drafted back three years ago to rescue the company he helped to found, said he hoped Mercury Asset Management would "come into line".

The investment group has about 5 per cent of the shares in YTT, whose chief executive is Bruce Gyngell, the flamboyant former boss of TV-am who last year refused to screen an ITV programme because he regarded it as "sleazy" in its sexual content and who recently condemned ITV's "takeover tycoons" — seen to include Mr Robinson — for putting profit before quality.

Even though Mr Thomas claimed at one time that YTT was worth £17 a share, he said it was now "highly unlikely" that another bidder would enter the field. He warned that advertising revenues were slowing down and dismissed hostile shareholders as "greedy". Those who bought more than a year ago will reap a profit, while those who have been shareholders for 18 months or more will at least double their money.

Mr Robinson would not discuss any potential job losses as a result of the deal, nor the detail of how YTT would be merged with Granada's other television businesses, which also include the London station LWT, a stake in BSkyB and 50 per cent of DBD, which was this week awarded the digitial terrestrial broadcasting licence.

Show of strength as 500 join protest rally against Welsh firm's anti-union stance

Solidarity ... Labour MP for Blaenau Gwent, Llew Smith, addresses a 500-strong rally of members from the Communication Workers Union supporting sacked workers of Critchley Labels outside the factory at Crumlin in South Wales. The strike started last February after Critchley sacked the entire workforce PHOTOGRAPH: JEFF MORGAN

Millionaire founder quits Direct Line

Peter Wood made a fortune on the phone. Julia Finch examines what his future holds

Peter Wood (left) with Ian Chippendale, who succeeds him as chief executive of Direct Line.

PETER Wood, who made a multi-million pound fortune selling car insurance by telephone, announced yesterday he was quitting Direct Line, the company he started from scratch 13 years ago.

He is severing all ties with the company, which is now the UK's biggest motor insurer, and leaving the board of Royal Bank of Scotland, which owns Direct Line.

Last night Mr Wood, whose gigantic performance-related bonus payments once made him Britain's highest-paid company director and resulted in his employing a bodyguard, said he wants more leisure time but is "definitely not retiring".

The energetic 50-year-old tennis fan intends to repeat the success of Direct Line in Spain and the USA and wants to spend more time building up Privilege Insurance, which he launched with RBoS four years ago to provide car insurance for motorists considered bad risks.

"I don't want to work seven days a week any more," he said. "I want to play more tennis and maybe learn golf. But I'm an entrepreneur."

This autumn he will be launching two US companies selling motor and household insurance, backed by US partners and $215 million (£130 million). He is also staying on at a Spanish Direct Line joint venture, which is already Spain's fastest growing insurance company.

He has further plans to float Privilege Insurance on the UK stock market. "That's possibly three years down the line," he said last night.

In 1993 Mr Wood struck a £42 million deal with the bank to end his annual bonus payment — which had reached £18 million. The performance payments had been agreed when he sold out his 25 per stake to the bank. At the time, the bonus buy-out was described by the then shadow trade secretary, Robin Cook, as "obscene" and analysts said RBoS was paying too much as Direct Line's profits would fall.

Mr Wood hated the annual media circus that accompanied his bonus and negotiated the buy-out partly to avoid the publicity. But it proved to be an astute move. At the time of the buy-out the insurer, which covers more than 2 million UK drivers, made £50 million a year. But its profits have since been hit hard by discounting and copycat telephone insurers.

Mr Wood used £8 million of the buy-out cash to buy 2.4 million RBoS shares and promised to hold them until at least 1998. Mr Wood said last night that the restriction no longer applied and that he would be selling some shares. He said he was not receiving any pay-off from RBoS but would get "a very modest" pension payment, understood to be around £750,000.

Boots' boss tops the million again

Julia Finch

BOOTS' chief, Lord Blyth, was paid more than £1 million last year — the second year in succession he has topped the seven-figure mark, even though his basic salary is less than half that amount.

Lord Blyth's pay in the 12 months to the end of March this year totalled £1,015,000, slightly down on the previous year's grand total of £1,175,000.

But during the previous year he had received a £580,000 payment after Boots abolished all executive share option awards.

In the 12 months to the end of March he has once again earned almost all that amount as a result of a variety of rises and cash bonus payments of £338,000. The latter alone is equal to 35 weeks basic pay.

Lord Blyth's basic salary rose from £470,000 to £500,000 and his short-term bonus from £105,000 to £181,000. In addition, he received a new long-term bonus of £314,000 — with half paid now in cash and the other half held back for three years, when it will be paid in shares.

Lord Blyth's bonuses soared as Boots delivered record profits of £571 million, compared with £508 million a year earlier.

Elsewhere on the board, finance director David Thompson's basic pay rose £20,000 to £260,000. He also received a short-term bonus of £96,000 and a long-term bonus of £81,000 now, with a further £81,000 in shares in 2000.

Steve Russell, managing director of Boots the Chemist got £240,000 basic, £90,000 short-term bonus and £132,000 long-term bonus in a similar cash and shares deal.

The two men have recently been named joint managing directors ahead of Lord Blyth's move to the chairman's office next year.

The company, which operates a profit-share scheme for all employees, recently revealed that the 50,000 staff who work at its high street chemists chain will share £34 million in bonuses this year. The payout equates to four and a half weeks pay for nearly all full-time and part-time staff.

● Bill Castell, chief executive of Amersham International received a 53 per cent pay rise last year, from £314,781 to £480,255. He netted an additional £165,000 from cashing in share options. Profits at the science group climbed 30 per cent, from £50.8 million to £65.8 million.

VW strikes a trail-blazing deal with staff

Mark Milner

VOLKSWAGEN and its 90,000 workers have negotiated a ground-breaking pay and conditions deal that will increase pressure for similar agreements in Germany's key engineering sector.

The VW package gives the company greater production flexibility by allowing Saturday working in exchange for shorter hours or early retirement for older workers.

VW employees will also get a 4 per cent increase in pay over the next two years while the pact provides job guarantees until 1999.

The agreement follows hard on the heels of a deal at Bayer, one of Germany's big three chemical companies, which agreed to safeguard some 46,000 jobs and continuerecruitment of trainees in exchange for more flexibility over working hours and reductions in perks.

The flexibility deals have been struck as Germany faces record post-war levels of unemployment and mounting criticism of its rigid labour market structures.

Commenting on the VW deal, Jürgen Graf, the head of SGZ-Bank in Frankfurt, said: "This trend to greater flexibility is only the beginning. There is good news for both sides in this agreement and the company and workers can live with it."

VW, which has a record of innovation in industrial relations deals, has agreed that workers aged 55 can opt to take early retirement or reduce their working hours but still receive 85 per cent of their net income up to the normal retirement age of 60.

For its part the company will be allowed to introduce working on Saturdays, normally a sacrosanct day off, to meet increased demand. "We have arrived at a compromise for the respective areas in difficult negotiations," said VW's chief negotiator, Jochen Schumm. "It will lead to increased flexibility and allow us to react to the higher demand for our cars."

Other employers, however, may be reluctant to follow VW's early retirement initiative, arguing that it will be too expensive. "We cannot agree to sector-wide contracts that would impose such additional costs on our members," said Peer-Michael Dick, business manager for the Baden-Württemberg Engineering Employers Federation.

But IG Metall, the huge trade union that sees early retirement as a way to reduce Germany's jobless toll, indicated yesterday that it may try to get its way through industrial action.

Profiteers face register of shame

Simon Beavis and Ian Wylie

ENERGY companies and banks tried yesterday to make the case for self-regulation when they produced new codes of practice and promised to publish the names of firms taking customers for a ride.

In preparation for next year's liberalisation of the domestic gas and electricity markets, the Electricity Association teamed up with consumer watchdogs from the two sectors to form the Association of Energy Suppliers.

The organisation has produced a code of practice to govern the selling of energy to households and promised to police dodgy marketing by naming any companies involved in unethical practices.

At the same time the British Bankers Association said it would also "name and shame" banks and building societies which do not sign up to a new code of practice.

The move by the AES will be backed by a modest £60,000 budget. It will rely on peer pressure in the absence of any move by the main regulators, Ofgas and Offer, to include a mandatory licence condition on ethical marketing and selling.

But backers of the new scheme, including the Gas Consumers Council and the Electricity Consumer Committees, insist that getting players to sign up to the code and publicising those who break its conditions — either quarterly or more immediately in dire cases — will be highly effective.

Sue Slipman, director of the Gas Consumers' Council, said: "What we have got is the best we could achieve outside a mandatory licence condition." Yvonne Constance, head of the ECC chairman's group, added: "We will know what is going on and reserve the right to go public."

The voluntary banking code, which takes effect on July 1, sets out banks and building societies' obligations to their customers. Banks and building societies will have five months to amend their systems and comply, but the BBA says it will consider publishing a list of banks and societies still to sign up in November.

The first banking code of practice was introduced in 1992 after banks were accused of shoddy customer service while ringing up huge profits. The code was criticised by consumer groups for lacking teeth, but was tightened two years later. Most UK banks and building societies adhere to it, although some of the American-owned banks such as MBNA, Beneficial and HFC have yet to sign up.

UK bottom in R&D spending

Simon Beavis
Industrial Editor

THE Government yesterday urged industry to step up spending on research and development as new figures showed that UK companies invest far less than their international competitors and now lag behind in every sector except pharmaceuticals.

The annual UK R&D scoreboard produced for the Department of Trade and Industry shows that, although spending has increased slowly in the last five years, the proportion of UK company sales reinvested in research is the lowest of all the G7 countries.

The UK and Italy share bottom place within the G7 with both investing 2.3 per cent of sales in R&D compared with 4.9 per cent for Japan, 4.6 per cent for Germany, 4.3 per cent for the US and 4 per cent for France. Canada easily outstrips the rest with 10.8 per cent; other countries, like Switzerland, Sweden and Denmark, are even further ahead.

Only in pharmaceuticals — where Glaxo Wellcome remains the world's biggest R&D spender despite a 3 per cent decline in investment last year to £1.16 billion — is Britain matching international spending rates.

In other key areas like engineering, electronics, telecommunications healthcare and chemicals, British companies are well below their international competitors even though there are exceptions to the rule.

Industry minister John Battle said that ultimately the future of the economy would be jeopardised unless there were more dynamic firms. "Unless we are investing at similar levels to our competitors around the world we are in danger of seeing an erosion of the UK's competitive position," he added. Taken with recent similar CBI findings on innovation spending, the figures added up to a "far from reassuring picture".

Writing in the report, Michael Hughes, economic adviser to the BZW group, said that shareholders were taking account of company spending on R&D when deciding where to invest in an era when new technologies promised prosperity. "For the UK not to be left behind, we need to ensure R&D is accorded the right status," he said.

Scoreboard

UK heads for relegation in the G7 R&D league

	% of sales invested in R&D
Canada	10.8
Japan	4.9
Germany	4.6
US	4.3
France	4.0
Italy	2.3
UK	2.3

Underside

Dan Atkinson

TOP brass at the Pru, we hear, are discovering urgent reasons to be out of contact when the admen call asking for volunteers to follow their chief executive Sir Peter Davis on-camera. Apparently, there have been some mutterings about the "Henry VIII" poses struck by Sir Peter. Come on fellas, break a leg ...

PUBLICITY shyness is the likely order of the day at Wall Street securities behemoth CSFB after its hard-hitting report on companies offering cures for the millennium computer bug. Several stocks — including Seec, Zitel Corporation, Viasoft and Data Dimensions — fell after CSFB circulated The Year 2000 Bubble, advising sell, sell, sell. The circular suggested these companies had millennium-bug products that were not as good as they were cracked up to be. Unfortunately, it seems CSFB has itself been hit by a bug of some kind as the report was never supposed to have seen the light of day. Don't ever change.

AN EERIE lack of green-crusade action yesterday morning against the long row of Jags and Mercs squatting on double-yellow lines half way up Whitehall. Nothing *whatsoever* to do with the fact that these vehicles (complete with drivers) were waiting for leading businessmen to finish discussions on welfare reform in Number 11 Downing Street ...

A FINE line in gallows humour from Martin Weale, ex-Treasury wise man, now defunct, as Labour plans an American-style council of windbags (sorry, economic advisers). He noted at a conference on Tuesday that Gordon Brown took longer to sack him than Ken Clarke had ever taken listening to his advice ...

MEANWHILE, spotted at the Hyde Park Hotel last week: Sir David English, supreme allied commander of Associated Newspapers, and Evening Standard editor Max Hastings. Up for discussion: misbehaving circulation and lack of metropolitan buzz at the Smoke's sole pm title. MH was told to pull his breeches up and forget his country pursuits. We hope he stood firm: the Standard isn't Time Out and plenty of its readers (a) live in the wilds, (b) want to, (c) pretend to. Metropolitan buzz. Ha!

CONCLUDING our jobs-on-the-line sequence, safety notice spotted outside Euston Square House, undergoing refurbishment: No Hat. No Boots. No Job!

AND in a new-job line, Asda chairman Archie Norman's plans for pepping up the Tory Party may be more radical than supposed if he applies the same tonic he used on the supermarket chain. Phase One: put the vegetables up front (see the shadow-cabinet reshuffle) and give the party a pleasing aroma (achieved at Asda by opening bakeries). Phase Two: Copy the party's mission from Asda's ("serving the interests of ordinary working people up and down the country"). Who says the right is in charge?

NOT everyone is joyful at the new banking practice code, effective next week. The Consumers Association (invited to help draft the code) is unhappy that adherence is only voluntary (as opposed, presumably, to being enforced by armed *Consumer Rouge* death squads). Perhaps the CA outght to pipe down: one bank yet to sign the code is Beneficial, issuer of credit cards for ... the Consumers Association.

ON a similar theme, candidate wanted to fill the shoes of outgoing WH Smith supremo Bill Cockburn, leaving after just 18 months. Step forward Liam Strong, the man who knows more than anybody about heading duff retailers, having just left Sears in a state fit only to be broken up.

IN OUR end is our beginning: where was TV star Sir Peter Davis hanging out Tuesday night? No 11, that's where, gracing a cocktail party for financial bigwigs. And Wednesday morning? Ditto, gracing a breakfast meeting to discuss the jobs-for-youth drive. As a wag noted, he may as well have stayed the night.

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مكرر من الاصل

Boxing

Odds cannot hurt proud Holyfield

Richard Williams in Las Vegas finds reasons for believing in the champion

"I KNOW how to do it," Evander Holyfield says, looking forward to the defence of his World Boxing Association heavyweight championship belt against Mike Tyson here on Saturday night. The odds-makers, who currently have Tyson at 2–1 on to regain the title, are not convinced.

But what do they, or any of us, know? Holyfield began the build-up to victory in the same location last November as a 25–1 outsider, odds that were reduced to a more realistic 7–1 on the day. In a poll of dozens of boxing critics, only one gave the nod to the notion of a Holyfield victory.

That man, Ron Borges of the Boston Globe, believes Holyfield has enough ammunition to prevent Tyson from becoming only the fourth heavyweight to regain the world title in an immediate rematch. Holyfield in the seventh, says Borges.

The build-up is, as usual, obscured by discussion of the size of the purse — each man will receive $30 million (£18 million) plus a slice of the television pay-per-view proceeds which will push gross receipts above $100 million — and by the dense fog of philosophical mumbo-jumbo that nowadays settles over any Tyson contest.

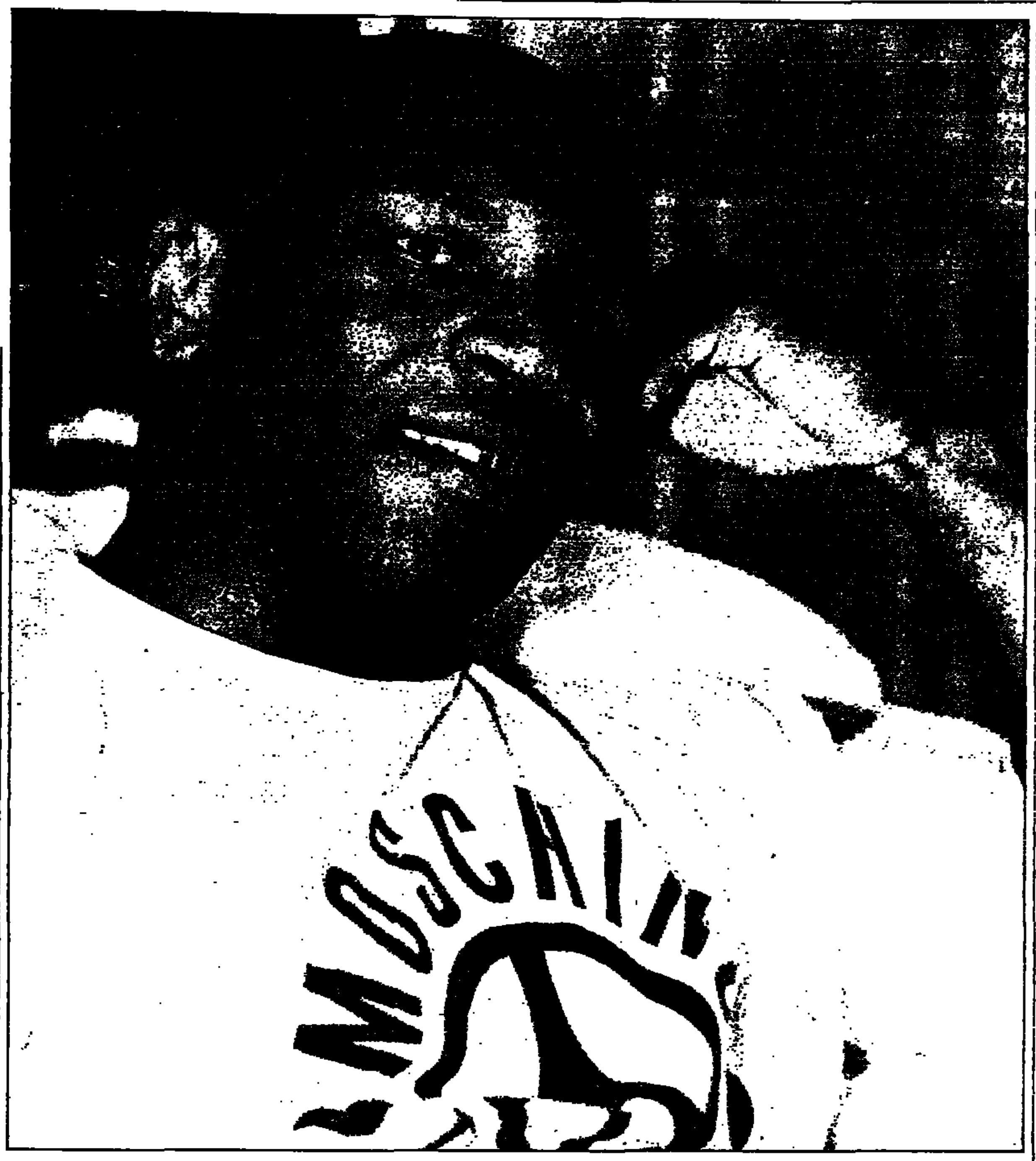
Talking the other day about what he had learned from reading books in prison, the former champion spoke opaquely of the motivation behind the eventual removal of the sycophants who had crowded his comeback. "There was one thing I realised," he said. "The leader is always alone at the time of doom." Whether he meant that great struggles must always be undertaken alone, or that defeat inevitably left a man without friends, he did not explain. But Tyson can ill afford to clutter his mind with metaphysics and motivation at a time when he needs to be concentrating on avoiding Holyfield's punches while landing a few of his own.

He may be helped by the return to his camp of Richie Giachetti, his former trainer who was disastrously supplanted by Jay Bright when Tyson emerged from prison to begin his comeback in 1995. Early in that campaign, against the likes of Buster Mathis and Frank Bruno, the poor quality of the opposition disguised the reduction of Tyson's fighting repertoire.

Holyfield, the first fighter in this phase of Tyson's career prepared to enter the ring in the belief that he was at least as good as the man he was facing, taught him the lesson that his own elemental power was no longer enough to overcome a proper challenge. Tyson had built muscle at the expense of agility and had forgotten the basic tenets of defensive boxing.

To reclaim the title on Saturday, Tyson will need to have improved his lateral movement considerably. If he is arrogant enough to leave his head as a static target for Holyfield's long-range blows he will lose again.

That seems to be what Holyfield thinks will happen. The champion advises us to watch out for the closing moments of each round, when Tyson tends to leave a calling card.



Facing the press . . . but Mike Tyson has left many questions unanswered about the Las Vegas rematch on Saturday

"I realised he always liked, at the bell, to get a couple of shots in," said Holyfield. His own swift response to such a combination at the end of the first round in November was, he believes, when Tyson realised he might be in for a difficult night. "It was important to get the last shot in, to send him back to the corner with something to think about."

At 30, Tyson will never regain the sense of invulnerability that armoured him before he got careless in and out of the ring. But as a born-again mortal, does he have the hard-headed realism to approach the job scientifically, rather than as a matter of destiny?

Lacking neither realism nor confidence, the champion can afford a sense of destiny. "Tyson's tough," Holyfield said. "He was everything that many people say he was. But I was more."

Golf

Money comes second with Montgomerie

David Davies at Versailles

THERE is a shortage of top names in the French Open, which begins today at the National course near here. It would be a waste of time searching for Severiano Ballesteros in the draw, or Bernhard Langer, and you would certainly fail to find Nick Faldo.

Not that the organisers were content to dispense with those three. Indeed, all were approached and indicated a willingness to be in Paris this week if the money was right. Not the prize-money, of course, because with a fund of £600,000, and the winner taking £100,000, there is sufficient of that.

No, the reason this distinguished trio is not present on one of Europe's finest courses is simply that the sponsor did not agree with their assessment of their own worth.

Faldo, as is his wont when he does not particularly want to play in an event, asked for silly money: the same as the first prize. Langer's management asked for £41,000; and Ballesteros, who has missed the cut in eight of the 10 European events in which he has played, wanted an amazing £51,500.

The organisers to their credit demurred, which means that Colin Montgomerie is the sole representative of the top 10 in the world rankings.

The increasingly substantial Scot moved from sixth to third after his second place in the US Open two weeks ago and is now behind only Ernie Els and Tiger Woods. They have both won major championships, of course, but Montgomerie is, by a distance, the highest-ranked player not to have achieved that feat. Jumbo Ozaki, Japan's No. 1, comes next at eighth, followed by Mark O'Meara at ninth and Phil Mickelson at 11th.

Understandably Montgomerie is a little touchy about the tag "the best player not to have won a major", because it has been with him rather too long. "They say you have to lose a few before you win one," he said yesterday, adding "and I think I've paid my dues now.

"Perhaps next time I'm in contention someone might make a mistake rather than do something very good. I'm not proud, I'm prepared to win with a bogey or with someone making a mistake."

In previous majors Montgomerie has suffered Steve Elkington holing a 20-foot putt at the first extra hole of the US PGA, finished third in a three-man play-off for the US Open, and then, at Congressional, seen Els par the hugely difficult 17th, their 71st, a hole which cost the Scot a bogey in every round.

Like Faldo before him Montgomerie's life revolves around the majors, and even now his mind is on Royal Troon where the Open Championship is to be held in three weeks' time. "I've been looking forward to it since it [the venue] was announced six years ago," he said.

The Scot has been the European No. 1 for the past four years, equalling the record set by Peter Oosterhuis, but says that coming top again "doesn't mean as much as winning a major right now.

"I want to do something new, and winning a major would be new for me. But," he added with due acknowledgment of the endeavours to come this week, "don't get me wrong: every time I enter a tournament, I want to win."

Sandy Lyle, 39, the former Open and US Masters champion, plays his first European Tour event of the season, and Australia's Robert Allenby, who beat Langer in a play-off last year, defends his title.

Racing

Eddery set for double treble

Ken Oliver

PAT EDDERY, who rode a treble at Salisbury yesterday, can repeat the performance at the Wiltshire course this afternoon with Law Commission, Herminius and Inimitable.

Law Commission (3.00) had been specially prepared for a crack at last week's Royal Hunt Cup and was far from disgraced, finishing 11th of 32 to Red Robbo.

It was his best effort of the season and David Elsworth, the gelding's trainer, has secured the services of the champion jockey in the Noel Cannon Memorial Handicap.

Family Man, from James Fanshawe's stable, looks the main threat after a convincing win at Newmarket but Law Commission, a course winner, is preferred.

The Champagne Auction Stakes has a very open look about it and those who saw Parisian Lady bolt home here earlier this month will certainly have her on their short list.

Tony Newcombe's filly was my original selection until the rain arrived. Drawn in stall 16, she could be at a disadvantage and it could pay to rely on Herminius (3.30) who is well drawn in the number two slot.

John Dunlop's colt showed plenty of potential on his debut at Doncaster last month when fourth to Desert Prince. He was not knocked about when victory was out of the question behind that smart winner and should improve greatly for that outing.

Inimitable (5.00), also from Dunlop's yard, has been lightly raced. She appears to be on a winning mark in the concluding Alington Maiden Handicap.

Will To Win (4.00) could prove the pick of the Deverill Fillies' Handicap. Pat Murphy's three-year-old ran well when third to Dayrella at Windsor earlier this month and from a favourable draw, and with the going she prefers, looks worthy of the nap.

Strawberry Roan has attracted support for Sunday's Budweiser Irish Derby at The Curragh following the news that Frankie Dettori will ride the filly.

Ladbrokes have cut her odds from 6–1 to 5–1 and she is joint-second favourite along with stable companion Desert King. Silver Patriarch heads the market at 4–5.

Tote Credit offices on racecourses will no longer be allowed to offer board prices on horse racing at 'away' as well as 'home' meetings. The decision was taken by the Horserace Betting Levy Board at their monthly meeting in London yesterday.

The Board made the move after confirming its policy of approving betting in on-course betting offices only at starting price.

However, it clarified its position by announcing the restriction only applies to horserace betting and board prices will still be allowed on greyhound racing and on sports on which betting takes place but which do not return a starting price.

Mark Rimmer, who was detained overnight in hospital after a fall at Warwick on Tuesday, suffered only bruising and returned home yesterday.

Results

CARLISLE

2.15 (5f 207yds): 1, ELOQUENT, G Duffield (4–6 Fav); **2, Pageant House** (8–1); **3, Empire Park** (12–1). 9 ran. ¾, 2½. (Sir Mark Prescott) Tote: £1.70; £1.10, £1.80, £2.80. Dual F: £5.60. Trio: £17.00. CSF: £7.88. Non Runner: Bawsian.

2.45 (5f 207yds): 1, NERVOUS REX, J Wilkinson (5–1); **2, Needle Match** (12–1); **3, Ultra Beet** (9–2). 7–2 Fav Marino Street. 15 ran. 2¾, 1¾. (W Muir) Tote: £5.40; £1.70, £4.50, £2.10. Dual F: £54.00. Trio: £154.10. CSF: £60.87.

3.15 (6f 206yds): 1, WINTER SCOUT, R Winston (11–2); **2, Mr Cube** (4–1); **3, Allinson's Mate** (5–1). 7–2 Fav Euro Sceptic. 10 ran. ¾, nk. (R Fahey) Tote: £6.80; £2.80, £1.60, £1.40. Dual F: £18.00. Trio: £21.10. CSF: £26.13. Tricast: £111.37.

3.45 (7f 214yds): 1, RAINBOW RAIN, M Roberts (8–1); **2, Bollin Frank** (5–1 Jt Fav); **3, Topstart** (9–1). 5–1 Jt Fav Murphy's Gold. 15 ran. ¾, shd. (M Johnston) Tote: £6.90; £1.90, £2.80, £2.90. Dual F: £17.90. Trio: £140.90. CSF: £37.61. Tricast: £270.64.

4.15 (5f 207yds): 1, COURT EXPRESS, A Culhane (5–2); **2, Bold Brief** (6–1); **3, Tollwied** (6–1). 5–4 Fav Priory Gardens. 6 ran. 1¾, 4. (T Etherington) Tote: £3.10; £1.70, £3.10. Dual F: £20.10. CSF: £17.84. Tricast: £86.93. Non Runners: Forest Signal, Tacibart.

4.45 (2m 1f 52yds): 1, BLACK ICE BOY, Dean McKeown (33–1); **2, Artesia** (11–2 Co Fav); **3, Penny Peppermint** (20–1). 11–2 Co Fav Euphoric Illusion. 15 ran. ¾, 3. (R Bastiman) Tote: £132.50; £12.10, £1.90, £8.20. Dual F: £499.60. CSF: £207.85. Tricast: £3,615.25.

5.15 (1m 4f): 1, SHEROY, Mr A Balding (Evens Fav); **2, Heights of Fame** (9–2); **3, Able Player** (16–1). 7 ran. 1¾, 4. (S Kettlewell) Tote: £2.60; £1.20, £1.90. Dual F: £8.50. CSF: £6.78.

JACKPOT: Not won. Pool of £5,749.82 carried forward to Salisbury today.

QUADPOT: £70.10. PLACEPOT: £216.70.

SALISBURY

2.30 (5f): 1, KAWAFIL, R Hills (11–4 Fav); **2, Perfect Harmony** (16–1); **3, Kenkes** (4–1). 11 ran. 5, 1¾. (P Walwyn) Tote: £3.20; £1.40, £3.50, £4.60. Dual F: £61.20. Trio: £72.20. CSF: £46.77.

3.00 (1m): 1, CAPE PIGEON, D Holland (7–1); **2, Young Duke** (3–1 Fav); **3, Persian Dawn** (50–1). 15 ran. 8, 2. (L Cottrell) Tote: £7.50; £2.90, £2.00, £10.60. Dual F: £9.10. Trio: £802.20. CSF: £23.77. Non Runners: Moredun, Tarlan.

3.30 (6f 212yds): 1, SHOW KID, Pat Eddery (5–2 Jt Fav); **2, Pepplatt** (7–1); **3, Mr Spongo** (5–2 Jt Fav). 7 ran. 7, 1¾. (D Loder) Tote: £3.10; £1.20, £3.20. Dual F: £10.20. CSF: £19.45.

4.00 (1m 4f): 1, RAINWATCH, Pat Eddery (2–1 Fav); **2, Heart of Armor** (9–4); **3, Spy Knoll** (6–1). 9 ran. 7, ¾. (J Dunlop) Tote: £3.40; £1.60, £2.30, £2.00. Dual F: £13.90. Trio: £16.00. CSF: £15.28. Tricast: £82.62. Non Runners: Badge of Fame, Highly Prized.

4.30 (6f 212yds): 1, DULCINEA, D Harrison (5–1); **2, Mike's Double** (11–2); **3, Oiko** (14–1). 4–1 Fav Free As A Bird. 10 ran. 1¾, hd. (I Balding) Tote: £6.60; £2.40, £1.60, £3.00. Dual F: £16.80. Trio: £57.40. CSF: £28.71.

5.00 (5f): 1, WHITE EMIR, Pat Eddery (9–2 Co Fav); **2, Polster** (5–1); **3, Half Tone** (9–2 Co Fav). 9–2 Co Fav Bajan Rose. 8 ran. Nk, ¾. (B Meehan) Tote: £4.40; £1.90, £1.50, £1.60. Dual F: £17.60. Trio: £19.80. CSF: £24.61. Tricast: £98.62. Non Runner: Literary Society.

QUADPOT: £73.40.

PLACEPOT: £115.50.

● Evening results on page 14

Carlisle

	KEN OLIVER	TOP FORM
2.15	Up The Clarets	Velvet Story
2.45	Compatibility	Compatibility
3.15	William's Well	William's Well
3.45	Westminster	Westminster
4.15	King Uno	Prime Partner (nb)
4.45	Pension Fund	Pension Fund
5.15	Highspeed	Highspeed

Right-handed, pear-shaped course of 1⅝m with 3½f run-in. Separate 6f bears right shortly after start with stiff rise to winning post.
Going: Good. ★ Denotes blinkers.
Draw: High-numbers favoured in sprints.
Long distance travellers: Delight of Dawn (4.15), E A Wheeler, Oxon, 294 miles; Warning Reef (3.45), P Eccles, Berks, 287 miles; Flyaway Hill (5.15), P W Harris, Oxon 275 miles.
Seven day winners: 3.45 Westminster; 4.15 Kass Alhawa; 5.15 Dee Pee Tee Cee.
Blinkered first time: 4.45 Robbo. Visored: 4.15 David James' Girl.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing

2.15 CUMREW SELLING STAKES 2YO 5f £2,175 (8 declared)

1 (8)	126601	Risky Whisky (6) (D) J Berry 9-4	P Fessey (3) ★	88
2 (4)	16000	Flash d'Or (6) (D) M W Easterby 8-13	G Parkin (5)	83
3 (2)	0050	General Joey (6) M Dods 8-11	S Webster ★	87
4 (7)	000006	Toll's Times (9) M W Easterby 8-11	T Lucas ★	80
5 (5)	66	Up The Clarets (27) J J O'Neill 8-11	K Darley	88
6 (6)	06	Velvet Story (17) N Tinkler 8-11	Kim Tinkler	●90
7 (3)	5	Anington Girl (14) P Evans 8-6	J Fortune	78
8 (1)	0	E B Treasure (20) N Bycroft 8-6	L Charnock	—

Betting: 11-8 Risky Whisky, 3-1 Up The Clarets, 5-1 Anington Girl, 7-1 Toll's Times, Velvet Story, 14-1 Flash D'or, 20-1 General Joey, E B Treasure.

2.45 PLAYGROUP LUNCHEON CLUB MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES 5f 207yds £2,853 (7 declared)

1 (5)	-05000	Finisster (6) M Dods 4-9-7	C Teague (3) ★	85
2 (1)	2	Bongo (31) C Thornton 3-9-0	D McKeown	81
3 (4)		Chief's Spirit G M Moore 3-9-0	J Tate	—
4 (3)	0-535	Compatibility (26) J Gosden 3-9-0	G Hind	●90
5 (2)	0	Running Bear (31) Miss S Hall 3-9-0	J Carroll	—
6 (7)		La Pardona Miss M Milligan 3-9-0	A Culhane	—
7 (6)	35-535	Mystique Air (6) E Weymes 3-8-9	J Weaver	88

Betting: 4-9 Compatibility, 7-2 Mystique Air, 9-2 Bongo, 25-1 Chief's Spirit.

3.15 LADBROKES LUCKY CHOICE HANDICAP 5f £2,856 (8 declared)

1 (5)	000511	William's Well (19) (7lb ex) (D) M W Easterby 9-8	G Parkin (5) ★	●90
2 (8)	0-0610	Toronto (18) (D) J Berry 9-7	P Fessey (3) ★	87
3 (6)	044154	Rum Lad (9) J J Quinn 9-6	J Lowe	84
4 (7)	0302-0	Melbourne Princess (64) R Whitaker 9-2	D McKeown	85
5 (2)	6-0000	Heathyards Pearl (14) R Hollinshead 9-2	D Griffiths (3)	86
6 (3)	-00040	Red Romance (3) D Smith 9-0	L Charnock	82
7 (1)	0300	Bellarus (38) M Dods 8-11	S Webster	87
8 (4)	-60066	Star Of The Road (20) J Carr 8-11	A Culhane	88

Betting: 7-4 William's Well, 4-1 Toronto, 5-1 Rum Lad, 6-1 Star Of The Road, 8-1 Melbourne Princess, Bellarus, 10-1 Red Romance, 20-1 Heathyards Pearl.

3.45 UCB FILMS CUMBERLAND PLATE HANDICAP 1m 4f £7,003 (9 declared)

1 (8)	21/0-5	Crystal Falls (9) J J O'Neill 4-10-0	K Darley	82
2 (5)	20-154	Ballpoint (22) (D) G M Moore 4-9-9	G Parkin (5)	88
3 (6)	2-0660	Warning Reef (28) P Eccles 4-9-9	D McKeown ★	87
4 (7)	2-0521	Westminster (5) (5lb ex) (D) M Tompkins 5-8-4	P Clarke (7) ★	●90
5 (2)	40-034	Just Grand (10) M Johnston 3-8-1	J Weaver	80
6 (9)	5333-0	Bax Mandi (20) P Evans 5-9-0	J Carroll	84
7 (3)	310443	Saga Hawk (19) E Alston 5-8-11	G Hind	87
8 (4)	16-213	Campaspe (24) (D) J FitzGerald 5-8-11	J Fortune	88
9 (1)	/04610	Durgams First (19) (CD) (BF) Mrs M Reveley 5-8-1	A Culhane	86

Betting: 9-4 Westminster, 5-1 Ballpoint, Just Grand, Campaspe, 7-1 Saga Hawk, 8-1 Durgams First, 10-1 Crystal Falls.

4.15 RED MILLS IRISH HORSEFEEDS HANDICAP (Lady amateurs) 6f 206yds £2,444 (13 declared)

1 (8)	034431	Kass Alhawa (6) (5lb ex) D Chapman 4-11-12	R Clark	86
2 (3)	40-4310	Murphy's Gold (1) (CD) R Fahey 6-11-5	C Williams (5)	87
3 (6)	000304	Delight Of Dawn (10) (D) E Wheeler 5-11-1	L Pearce	88
4 (11)	050042	Mildrian City (6) (CD) J Berry 4-10-8	V Marshall (3) ★	85
5 (1)	0-0033	Suedoro (8) J Goldie 7-10-7	P Robson	87
6 (12)	0-0041	King Uno (10) (5lb ex) Mrs J Ramsden 3-10-7	E Ramsden (5) ★	89
7 (7)	0-5405	Manhattan Diamond (36) A Bailey 3-10-5	A Hutchinson (5) ★	81
8 (13)	450300	David James' Girl (6) (D) A Bailey 5-10-5	B Gatehouse (3) ★	80
9 (9)	0-0001	Prime Partner (8) T Easterby 4-10-1	A Deniel (5)	●90
10 (2)	006-60	Bellsay Star (20) J Eyre 4-10-1	D Jones	81
11 (5)	000600	Rossate Lodge (15) (C) (D) S Kettlewell 11-10-0	D Kettlewell	84
12 (10)	50006	Al Mojbabid (3) S Kettlewell 3-9-13	S Bosley	80
13 (4)	400/06	Mazzecco (14) (D) T Cuthbert 8-9-4	R Cuthbert (5)	78

Betting: 4-1 King Uno, 9-2 Murphy's Gold, 5-1 Kass Alhawa, 7-1 Prime Partner, 8-1 Delight Of Dawn, Mildrian City, 10-1 Suedoro, David James' Girl, Bellsay Star.

4.45 RAYOPHANE HANDICAP 3YO 1m £2,914 (6 declared)

1 (2)	445062	Get The Point (15) R Hollinshead 9-7	P Lynch	89
2 (4)	000002	Pension Fund (8) M W Easterby 9-4	T Lucas	●90
3 (5)	564	Storyteller (15) Mrs J Ramsden 8-8	J Fortune	83
4 (3)	236036	Captain Carparts (8) J Eyre 8-7	T Williams	88
5 (6)	55602	Robbo (8) C Thornton 8-6	D McKeown ★	86
6 (1)	341555	Diamond Eyre (10) J Eyre 8-4	R Lappin	86

Betting: 2-1 Get The Point, 3-1 Storyteller, 9-2 Pension Fund, Diamond Eyre, 13-2 Captain Carparts, 10-1 Robbo.

5.15 WALTON LIMITED STAKES 1m £2,598 (7 declared)

1 (7)	531100	Power Game (5) (D) J Berry 4-9-9	T E Durcan (5) ★	84
2 (6)	030-2	Beano Script (18) J Hanson 4-9-5	Dale Gibson	85
3 (5)	640-03	Highspeed (14) (D) S Kettlewell 5-9-5	J Fortune	●90
4 (3)	625-40	Move Smartly (48) (D) Mrs L Stubbs 7-9-5	J Weaver	78
5 (1)	0-0020	Superpride (5) (BF) Mrs M Reveley 5-9-5	A Culhane	82
6 (2)	-00701	Dee Pee Tee Cee (5) M W Easterby 3-8-13	T Lucas	88
7 (4)	50-50	Flyaway Hill (16) P Harris 3-8-6	K Darley	86

Betting: 15-8 Dee Pee Tee Cee, 3-1 Highspeed, 5-1 Superpride, 6-1 Power Game, Beano Script, 8-1 Flyaway Hill, 14-1 Move Smartly.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Jockeys	1st	Runs	%	Level St
K Darley	20	114	17.5	-22.82
K Fallon	16	91	17.6	-10.67
G Duffield	13	76	17.1	-25.29
J Fortune	12	94	12.8	-35.86
J Weaver	9	58	15.5	-3.17
O Pears	7	29	24.1	+9.17
Dean McKeown	7	83	8.4	-12.17

Trainers	1st	Runs	%	Level St
Mrs M Reveley	16	68	23.2	+11.80
J Berry	15	107	14.6	-43.77
Mrs J R Ramsden	14	55	25.5	+31.88
M Johnston	12	67	17.9	-9.42
M R Tompkins	7	25	28.5	+3.72
P D Evans	6	38	15.8	-11.13
E Weymes	5	21	23.8	+28.75

Salisbury with form guide

	KEN OLIVER	TOP FORM
2.00	Celtic Comfort	Celtic Comfort
2.30	Montfort	Corradini
3.00	Law Commission	Family Man (nap)
3.30	Herminius	Parisian Lady
4.00	Will To Win (nap)	Corniche Quest
4.30	Silver Lining	Merciless Cop
5.00	Inimitable	Bathe In Light

Right-handed loop course for races of 1¼m plus. Run-in of 7f forms part of nearly straight mile
Going: Good to Soft. ★ Denotes blinkers.
Draw: Low numbers favoured.
Long distance travellers: Celtic Comfort (2.00), P C Haslam, N Yorks, 264 miles; Newmarket-trained runners, 151 miles.
Seven day winners: None.
Blinkered first time: 4.00 Into Debt; 5.00 Executive Officer. Visored: 4.00 Sand Star, Small Risk.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing

2.00 SOUTHAMPTON CLAIMING STAKES 2YO 7f £2,553 (9 declared)

101 (7)	0	Dancing Al (26) J S Moore 9-1	N Adams	54
102 (8)	0	Celtic Comfort (17) P Haslam 8-11	R French (5)	●90
103 (6)	523611	Who Nose (30) B Meehan 8-10	M Tebbutt ★	86
104 (2)	2151	Lord Smith (35) W G M Turner 8-8	D McGaffin (7)	89
105 (3)	00R	Distinctly Lillie (22) J S Moore 8-5	A Clark	76
106 (5)	5414	Figawin (8) G Lewis 8-4	Paul Eddery	88
107 (1)	68	Goldenacres (20) J Neville 8-4	S Drowne	76
108 (4)	0	Jasmine Tea (18) M Meade 7-13	F Norton	84
109 (6)	0	Astrofell (87) J S Moore 7-12	M Henry (3)	—

Betting: 5-2 Lord Smith, 11-4 Who Nose, 3-1 Celtic Comfort, 7-2 Figawin, 14-1 Goldenacres, Jasmine Tea, 16-1 Dancing Al, Distinctly Lillie, 50-1 Astrofell.

FORM GUIDE - Dancing Al: Upset in stalls, missed break, always behind, 11th of 12, behind Cape Verdi at Newmarket 6f 2y mdn, Gd-Fm. Celtic Comfort: Missed break, steady headway over 1f out, not given hard time and never placed to challenge, 7th of 14, 9l behind Tamarin Bay at Pontefract 5f 2y mdn auct, Gd-Fm. Sure to improve for longer trip. Who Nose: Held up, led over 1f out, pushed out, won at Leicester 6f 2y sell, Gd, beating The Honorable Lady by ½l. Lord Smith: Prominent, led entering the final furlong, ran on well, won at Newcastle as he pleased, 6f 2y claim, Gd, beating Swoosh by a nk. Figawin: Always chasing leaders, kept on one pace final 2f, 4th of 17, 2½l behind Tancred Times at Thirsk 6f 2y sell, Gd. Goldenacres: Never on terms both outings so far, including when never placed to challenge, 5th of 10, 10l behind Figawin at Southwell (aw) 6f 2y sell.

2.30 HERBERT AND GWEN BLAGRAVE MEMORIAL CONDITIONS STAKES 1m 6f £4,561 (4 declared)

201 (3)	310-44	Corradini (31) (D) H Cecil 5-10-0	W Ryan	●90
202 (4)	51460-	Smart Play (286) Lord Huntingdon 4-9-6	J Reid	88
203 (2)	0-311	Montfort (13) P Cole 3-8-13	T Quinn	88
204 (1)	44-10	Lettyfak (85) I Williams 3-8-9	Pat Eddery	—

Betting: 5-6 Corradini, 6-4 Montfort, 8-1 Smart Play, 14-1 Lettyfak.

FORM GUIDE - Corradini: Lost place over 2f out, ran on well towards the finish, 4th of 7, 2½l behind Persian Punch at Sandown 2m Gr 3, Gd. Smart Play: Never on terms with the leaders, last of 9, 35l behind Dear Life at Newmarket 1m 4f hcap, Gd-Fm. Montfort: Led 2f, lost place and ridden, headway 4f out, led 1f out, stayed on, won at York 1m 4f stks, Gd-Sft, beating Cybertechnology by 5l.

3.00 NOEL CANNON MEMORIAL TROPHY HANDICAP 1m £5,508 (10 declared)

301 (3)	03-000	Kaysee (8) (C) (D) Mrs A Perrett 8-10-0	A Clark	84
302 (2)	5110-	Strazo (350) (C) (D) Lady Herries 4-9-11	J Reid	84
303 (7)	126-54	My Lewicia (17) (D) P Harris 4-9-10	C Lowther (7)	86
304 (8)	50-600	Law Commission (6) (C) D Elsworth 7-9-9	Pat Eddery	88
305 (6)	1145-5	Diaion Luna (14) (D) J Hills 4-9-4	M Henry (3)	84
306 (1)	20-350	Cinema Paradiso (28) P Cole 3-8-13	T Quinn	84
307 (4)	40-251	Family Man (28) (D) J Fanshawe 4-8-12	D Harrison	●90
308 (5)	111-06	Koathary (17) (D) L Cottrell 6-8-10	D Holland	87
309 (10)	0325	Chief Monarch (28) B Smart 3-8-9	S Sanders	86
310 (9)	-00300	Waleed (12) (D) S Dow 5-8-7	A Daly (5)	87

Betting: 3-1 Family Man, 11-2 Law Commission, 13-2 Koathary, 7-1 Kaysee, Diaion Luna, Chief Monarch, Waleed, 8-1 Others.

FORM GUIDE - Strazo: With leaders to 2f out, gradually weakened towards the finish, 10th of 30, 11l behind Fahen at Newmarket 1m hcap, Gd-Fm. My Lewicia: Disappointing and did not look ready when held up, headway to go 2nd 3f out, ridden and weakened final 2f, last of 4, 16l behind Harry Wolton at Nottingham 1m stks, Gd-Fm. Law Commission: Has run well in defeat this term including when headway under pressure 2f out, never nearer, 11th of 32, 6l behind Red Robbo at Ascot 1m hcap, Gd-Fm, with Kaysee (gave 7lb), never nearer, 15th of 32, btn 9l. Diaion Luna: Consistent filly, prominent until weakened over 1f out, 5th of 8, 10l behind Heavenly at Newbury 7f hcap, Gd. Cinema Paradiso: Always behind, 13th of 18, 12l behind Philistar at Epsom 1m 1f hcap, Gd-Fm. Family Man: Ran promisingly this term before tracked leaders, led over 1f out, quickened clear, easily, won at Newmarket 1m hcap, Gd-Fm, beating Orsay by 3l. Open to improvement and should go close despite 6lb hike in ratings. Koathary: Unsuited by slowly-run race, effort and ridden 3f out, weakened 2f out, 6th of 7, 7l behind Moon Blast at Windsor 1m Stakes, Gd-Fm.

3.30 CHAMPAGNE AUCTION STAKES 2YO 7f £9,843 (18 declared)

401 (2)	4	Herminius (33) J Dunlop 8-12	Pat Eddery	85
402 (18)	31	Mountain Song (9) (D) M Prescott 8-12	G Duffield	88
403 (15)	210	Timekeeper (33) M Bell 8-11	M Fenton	88
404 (4)	232	Lago Be Friendly (13) (BF) K McAuliffe 8-8	J Reid	88
405 (1)	0	Royal Aussiestar (35) Mrs P Duffield 8-8	R Price	85
406 (6)	5	Saddlers' Hoe (33) B Hills 8-8	M Hills	84
407 (3)	010	Truth Teller (28) R Hannon 8-6	Dane O'Neill	84
408 (10)		Daring News R Hannon 8-5	R Perham	—
409 (12)		Imperator Lady Herries 8-5	A Clark	—
410 (17)	0	Black Jet (62) N Littmoden 8-4	R French	69
411 (6)	325	Five o'clock Shadow (33) B Meehan 8-4	T Quinn	83
412 (5)		Laurren's Lad G Lewis 8-4	Paul Eddery	—
413 (13)	21	Tamarin Bay (17) R Boss 8-4	W Ryan	88
414 (3)		Titan S Dow 8-1	S Sanders	—
415 (7)		Annie Hall M Meade 8-0	F Norton	—
416 (14)	6022	Fayrana (16) J Hills 7-13	M Henry	89
417 (11)	01	Misland (18) J S Moore 7-13	N Adams	72
418 (16)	1	Parisian Lady (16) (D) A Newcombe 7-13	J Quinn	●90

Betting: 9-2 Herminius, 6-1 Timekeeper, 7-1 Mountain Song, Tamarin Bay, 8-1 Saddlers' Hoe, Fayrana, Parisian Lady.

FORM GUIDE - Herminius: Steadied after start, in touch, headway 2f out, kept on well, 4th of 13, 7l behind Desert Prince at Doncaster 6f 2y mdn, Gd-Fm with Saddlers' Hoe (level), held up, pushed along 2f out, ran on towards finish, 5th of 13, btn 10l. Mountain Song: Made all, clear over 2f out, very easily, won at Thirsk 7f 2y mdn auct, Gd, beating Baja by 6l. Timekeeper: Chased winner over 2f, weakened over 1f out, last of 7, 9l behind Chips at Kempton 6f stks, Gd. Lago Be Friendly: Led after 2f, headed over 1f out, no chance with winner, 2nd of 14, 3½l behind Pure Conscience at Southwell (aw) 5f 2y mdn auct. Truth Teller: Behind final 2f, last of 8, 13l behind Dance Trick at Epsom 6f Listed, Gd-Fm. Daring News: Risk Me colt, brother to winning sprinter Red Hot Risk. Five o'clock Shadow: Held up, ridden over 2f out, weakened over 1f out, 5th of 7, 4½l behind Chips at Kempton 6f stks, Gd. Laurren's Lad: Tachyon Park colt, half-brother to 3 winners including 2 abroad. Tamarin Bay: Tracked leaders, led over 1f out, ran on well, won at Pontefract 5f 2y mdn auct, Gd-Fm, beating Tangerine Flyer by 5l. Titan: Lion Cavern colt, half-brother to 3 winners. Parisian Lady: 33-1, headway over 1f out, led inside final furlong, ran on well, won at Salisbury 6f 2y mdn auct, Fm, beating Fayrana (gave 7lb), chased leader, led 2f out until inside final furlong, 2nd of 12, btn 2½l.

4.00 DEVERILL FILLIES' HANDICAP 6f £3,210 (20 declared)

501 (5)	0-3021	Ahmad (19) (D) [illegible]	G Duffield	88
502 (4)	0-6412	Lucky Dip (15) D Elsworth [illegible]	J Reid	88
503 (17)	11054	Corniche Quest (18) (D) [illegible]	P P Murphy (3)	●90
504–520	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Betting: [illegible]

FORM GUIDE: [illegible]

4.30 CARNARVON CHALLENGE CUP HANDICAP (amateurs) 3YO 1m £2,796 (12 declared)

601–612: [illegible]

Betting: [illegible]

FORM GUIDE: [illegible]

5.00 ALINGTON MAIDEN HANDICAP 1m 2f £3,078 (18 declared)

1–15	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
16 (9)	00633	Way King Wayham (18) Mrs A King 4-7-10	J Quinn	79
17 (5)	0005/0	Asking (17) J Bennett 5-7-10	N Adams	—
18 (1)	0-0000	Executive Officer (12) R Flower 4-7-10	F Norton ★	—

Betting: 9-2 Bathe In Light, 5-1 Manikato, Inimitable, 6-1 Clouds Hill, 8-1 Sound Appeal, Bold Saint, Mycenae.

FORM GUIDE - Keen Companion: Always to the rear, 8th of 10, 4½l behind Molly Music at Southwell (aw) 1m mdn hcap. Manikato: Ridden over 2f out, headway over 1f out, ran on, 4th of 7, 3l behind Stand Tall at Brighton 7f stks, Fm. Sound Appeal: Good late headway, finished well, 7th of 18, 3½l behind Ghostgum Flyer at Salisbury 1m 3-y-o hcap, Fm. Inimitable: Never near to challenge, 9th of 13, 13l behind Arriving at Sandown 1m 3f 3-y-o hcap, Gd. Bathe In Light: Held up, headway 5f out, ridden and one pace approaching final furlong, 3rd of 14, 6l behind Lidu at Leicester 1m 2f 3-y-o hcap, Gd-Fm.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Jockeys	1st	Runs	%	Level St
L Dettori	26	104	25	+38.43
Pat Eddery	23	117	19.7	-14.35
T Quinn	22	148	14.9	-42.38
J Reid	22	165	13.3	-38.17
Dane O'Neill	14	97	14.4	-10.74
R Hughes	12	86	14	-20.56
M Hills	10	65	15.4	+12.90

Trainers	1st	Runs	%	Level St
R Hannon	39	312	12.5	-46.95
J L Dunlop	14	109	12.8	-50.55
Lord Huntingdon	13	56	23.2	-31.42
P F I Cole	13	92	14.1	-25.78
D R C Elsworth	10	107	9.32	-34.50
H R A Cecil	9	36	25.0	-12.50
M Channon	3	139	5.93	-85.10

Trainer watch

Horses having their first run for a new trainer today — Salisbury: 2.30 Lettyfak, A Fabre to I P Williams; 2.30 Smart Play, Mrs J Cecil to Lord Huntingdon; 3.00 Strazo, J H M Gosden to Lady Herries; 4.00 Tinker Osmaston, M S Saunders to R J Hodges; 4.30 Double Goal, B J Meehan to M Bell

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The Guardian INTERACTIVE

Wimbledon: Day Three

Wilkinson picked for Davis Cup

Richard Jago

CHRIS WILKINSON'S hostility to Greg Rusedski is officially over. Not only has the British No. 3 changed his mind about the Canadian import but the Davis Cup captain David Lloyd has adapted his views about Wilkinson.

After a two-year absence during which it seemed he might not play for his country again, Wilkinson, 27, has been rewarded for his performance in beating the seeded Jonas Bjorkman on Tuesday by inclusion in a six-man squad from which a team will be picked to play Ukraine in Kiev on July 11–13.

Wilkinson may thus become the team-mate of a player whose change of nationality and acceptance in the Great Britain team he once described as a disgrace and demotivating. If Wilkinson plays, it will be the first time for four years; if not, it is still a significant step in Rusedski's gaining a level of acceptance as a Briton.

"I didn't want to pick someone who didn't want to play for his country," said Lloyd. "Chris thought it was wrong, Greg playing. But Greg's carried the flag exceptionally well for Great Britain and done a very good job. Now Chris wants to play for his country again."

Wilkinson gave another reason for his change of heart. "It was more a question of what I was doing myself," he said. "Time has passed, things change and I want to play for my country again."

Contrary to reports, Lloyd and Wilkinson have been speaking to each other, though Wilkinson and Rusedski have done little more than acknowledge each other. "No, we haven't spoken to each other since the selection; that's still to come," Wilkinson said.

If there is awkward feeling, it may fall to David Lloyd's brother John, the Davis Cup coach, to jolly the mood along. He will also be attempting to integrate a squad that includes for the first time the 19-year-old former world No. 1 junior Martin Lee.

Wilkinson's change of mind has been made mostly from self-interest. But he is not blind to the effect Rusedski is beginning to have on this side of the Atlantic, as he indicated in an aside after his triumph over Bjorkman. "We need role models like Tim [Henman] and Greg doing well. It's good for the game," Wilkinson told reporters. "There, that's made you go quiet, hasn't it?"

At arm's length . . . Karol Hingis with photographs of his estranged daughter Martina, now far removed from her Slovakian origins as favourite to win the Wimbledon women's singles

A father's thoughts from home

Emanuelle Richard on why Karol Hingis keeps watch on his daughter by television

AS KAROL HINGIS sweeps the lines of his local clay court against the backdrop of a charmless neighbourhood of Kosice, Slovakia's second largest city, his only daughter is never far from his thoughts.

In 10 days' time Martina, at 16 the youngest world No. 1 in women's tennis, may become the youngest Wimbledon women's singles champion since Lottie Dod in 1887. But if the No. 1 seed does fulfil her ranking in London SW19, where last year she won the women's doubles with Helena Sukova, Karol will not be at the party. Instead he will again be watching on television from the sofa in his tenement flat on the city's outskirts, with only his dog for company.

Karol has followed her progress in this way since 1988, the year Martina and her mother, the former Czechoslovak player Melanie Molitor, moved from the then communist Czechoslovakia to Switzerland, with Melanie's new Swiss husband.

Since then the obscure father of the "Einstein of Tennis" has seen his daughter only twice or three times a year. "I take advantage of Martina's trips to the Czech Republic to go there and meet with her, but it's never very easy," says the former Slovak champion, now a coach.

Though sociable by nature he has learned caution, having had his fingers burned when Swiss and British tabloids decided to unveil the "mysterious Mr Hingis" from Martina's past. "They wrote horrible things about me," he says. "They wrote that my ex-wife used me as a 'tennis sire' in order to transmit my genes to our daughter. They also said I was living miserably in Slovakia, waiting for some financial help from my daughter who is now a multi-millionaire.

"All these atrocities can hardly contribute to improving my relationship with Melanie, and they end up turning against my daughter, which I can't tolerate."

Media interest in him peaked in early March, when Martina returned to Kosice for the first time in eight years to compete for Switzerland in a Fed Cup match against Slovakia. After she had crushed her Slovak opponent, Karol's kiss for his daughter was captured by the photographers; an unremarkable gesture but precious for a father now separated from his only child.

But Slovaks then came to realise that Martina Hingis's father lived among them. They also learned, to their chagrin, that Martina did not feel the least bit Slovakian. "I just happened to be born there, so what?" she told the local press.

Karol Hingis, the youngest of seven, had been raised with a racket not a rattle in his hand. He first played in the Slovak league at 15, but tennis did not pay the bills, so he worked as a car electrician and went to night school to catch up on the education he missed playing tournaments.

In the late Seventies he married Melanie, a Czech player from Moravia, now part of the Czech Republic. Their daughter was born in 1980 and Melanie named her after Martina Navratilova, the finest product of Czechoslovakia's prestigious tennis system. The name had become a talisman.

While Karol worked to pay the bills, Melanie quickly became a "tennis mom", obsessed with her daughter's career. As soon as Martina could walk, Melanie began developing her reflexes by throwing tennis balls to her. At the age of two Martina already had a custom-made racket. "I constructed this racket with an adapted handle for her tiny hands," Karol recalls. "Martina immediately started waving it in order to imitate her mother who was taking her every day to the tennis court."

Martina was three when, with her mother, she moved to live in Moravia. Karol joined them for a year but returned to eastern Slovakia from where he stayed in touch with his estranged family and Martina's nascent career.

Even at the age of six Martina was known as the "terror" of junior regional tournaments. "She was barely as tall as the net," says Zuzano Lesenarova, a 19-year-old Czech student from Moravia, who now competes for the University of California in San Diego. Lesenarova was nine when Martina, three years her junior, "smashed" her in their first match.

"She was already very cute and her tennis was already amazing," Lesenarova says.

> In Kosice, Martina and her father went shopping for stuffed toy animals — with two bodyguards

"Martina was only six and could already play every possible kind of stroke; volleys, half-volleys, and she was serving overhead on both serves. Not even a tennis genius can get this as gifted talent. To have these precise strokes you can only practise very, very much."

Martina was indeed spending her days hitting balls back and forth with her mother. "Melanie taught her the techniques with a master hand, and their work in tandem has always proved successful," says Karol. But this did not rob Martina of her childhood. "Despite her mother pushing her to play constantly, Martina was a very joyful kid, very playful too, and nimble as a little monkey. After I would come back from work we used to play around a lot together."

But Karol believes there is more to life than tennis. Melanie, though, had only one thing on her mind: to transform her daughter into a champion. The difference in philosophy led to divorce.

Lesenarova says she was struck by Martina's determination even at an early age. "She seemed to be under her pressure all the time. She already had this strange and nervous smile, which, to me, was not betraying any pleasure of playing but seemed to say, 'I have to show my opponent that I am the best or my mom will yell at me after the match'."

She will never forget one particular match in the Moravian town of Prerov in 1987. She defeated the future world No. 1 in front of an audience that consisted of their two mothers and Karol Hingis.

After a brilliant start, Martina lost two sets. "Suddenly Melanie jumped down on the court and started running behind her daughter, shouting instructions at her without stopping," said Lesenarova. "It was disturbing me quite a lot. At the same time Martina's eyes were so full of tears that she could hardly see anything. After I won she couldn't stop crying. I remember her father took her on his lap, hugged her and did his best to cheer her up. The match had been heavy going for him too, but it was hard to have any authority against Melanie."

Ten years on Karol admits: "It's thanks to her mom that Martina became the world's No. 1. The most important thing for me is that, despite all her success, her daughter has remained the same; a very joyful girl, thank God."

Martina is so strong mentally that Hingis cannot imagine her career being cut short like so many teenage tennis prodigies before her. His only regret is that he would like to have a closer relationship with his daughter. During her recent stay in Kosice, Martina and her father were able to go shopping for stuffed toy animals — accompanied by two bodyguards.

Back at the tennis club the morning lesson comes to an end for Karol Hingis the coach. He shakes his young pupil's hand, makes a joke and jogs off court: "Aren't I so lucky to teach tennis." Even if he earns only the average salary in Slovakia — a little less than £120 a month — he says he needs no more so long as he can afford to telephone his daughter and buy her little presents, such as the earrings he sent her by post. He did not know whether she had received them until he recognised them on television. "That day," he says, "I was happy."

Backhander

Yesterday at Wimbledon

Silly excuse that seems more sensible by the day "I was starting to feel a bit tight out there because I think it was starting to get a little bit cold," Michael Chang pinpoints the cause of his early evening defeat by Todd Woodbridge on Tuesday

And the winner will be... Statisticians predict that the winner of the ladies' singles title will be a 5'8" 20-year-old right-hander from the United States. That's according to the organisers of the Corel WTA tour, who have analysed the statistics of all 24 Grand Slam champions since 1968. The only hiccup with their theory is that no such player is competing at Wimbledon. The individual who most closely resembles this feted specimen is Michigan-born Corina Morariu – and she has never progressed beyond the first round of a Grand Slam

Fruitful statistics Tennis players' obsession with the banana is now benefiting the fans. While competitors at Wimbledon are munching their way through around 800 bananas a day, the Banana Group has been distributing the fruit to supporters camping overnight for tickets. If only Tim Henman could find similar energy-giving properties in caviar . . .

Scud's decisive moment "That's definitely, I think, definitely, probably the best I've had to return against," Mark Philippoussis still suffering the after-effects of his defeat by Greg Rusedski

Warming to the task Either global warming is having a sudden impact on Britain's weather or, dare we suggest, Wimbledon is held at the wrong time of year. The 74mm of rain that have fallen on London over the past two weeks compares with 10.5mm over the previous three

Scattered seeds

Rd 1 · Rd 2 · Rd 3 · Rd 4 · Qfinal · Semis · Final

Seed	Player	
1	P Sampras	Still in
2	G Ivanisevic	Still in
3	Y Kafelnikov	Still in
4	R Krajicek	Still in
5	M Chang	Knocked out: Woodbridge 7-6, 3-6, 6-2, 3-6, 6-6
7	M Philippoussis	Knocked out: Rusedski 7-6, 7-6, 6-3
8	B Becker	Still in
9	M Rios	Still in

No 6 seed T Muster withdrew injured

Seed	Player	
1	M Hingis	Still in
2	M Seles	Still in
3	J Novotna	Still in
4	I Majoli	Still in
5	L Davenport	Still in
6	A Coetzer	Still in
7	A Huber	Still in
8	A Sanchez Vicario	Still in

Key: Still in · Knocked out

Sport in brief

Sailing

Tracy Edwards and her all-women crew aboard the 92-foot catamaran Royal & Sun-Alliance sailed 424 miles in the 24 hours to midday yesterday in their attempt to break the transatlantic multihull record. They have 3½ more days to beat the mark of 6 days 13 hours set seven years ago by Serge Madec with Jet Services.

Royal & SunAlliance had 1,700 miles to go after completing 1,264 in far from favourable conditions. Her track has been close to the ice field brought south by the Labrador Current and at night her crew have had to slow the boat for safety reasons. "We saw many icebergs on the radar," reported Edwards, "but that is worse than seeing them for real."

Motor Racing

Emerson Fittipaldi, whose business ventures include orange plantations, men's sportswear and car accessories, is to launch a line of cigars produced in the Dominican Republic. The Brazilian won the world championship in 1972 and 1974 before switching to IndyCars in 1984.

Gerhard Berger has withdrawn from Sunday's French Grand Prix because he needs further rest after surgery for a sinus infection.

Ice Hockey

Newcastle Cobras have signed the goalie Wayne Cowley from the German club Wedemark Scorpions, *writes Vic Batchelder*. Cowley's net-minding was a major factor in Sheffield Steelers' Grand Slam-winning season two years ago before he moved to Germany. He will be joined at Newcastle by the forward Frank LaScala, a team-mate from last season.

Cobras have also signed two more Canadians, Jamie Pegg and Carmen Vani, from clubs in Norway and Italy respectively.

Rugby League

Widnes Vikings have signed the 23-year-old Castleford Tigers forward Sean Richardson on a month's loan.

Cricket

News and Scores

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Counties update

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Complete county scores

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The Guardian INTERACTIVE

Cycling

Camenzind cuts the gap

THE Swiss rider Oskar Camenzind thundered to victory in the ninth stage of the Tour of Switzerland yesterday, turning Christophe Agnolutto's freewheel to the title in today's final stage into an unexpected showdown. Camenzind, who began the 121-mile stage from Wetzikon trailing Agnolutto by 5min 14sec, chopped more than three minutes off the Frenchman's advantage with his second stage win.

Agnolutto still carries a 2min 08sec cushion into the 117-mile final stage into Zurich and there is only one modest mid-stage climb. "If I arrive in Zurich with the yellow jersey it will be the first time in my life that I will be happy being an average cyclist," he said. "I'm neither a roller nor a climber nor a sprinter but I manage everywhere."

Camenzind made several attempts at breakaways, finally powering away alone on the descent after an exhausting final climb 10½ miles from the finish.

The Dane Bjarne Riis, who will begin the defence of his Tour de France title on July 5, did not start yesterday, dropping out because of flu.

Chris Boardman, leader of the Tour of Catalonia, blew up on the mountains of yesterday's seventh stage and finished well down the field.

Wimbledon results

Women's Singles

Holder: S Graf (Ger)

First round

(Seeds in capitals)

M SELES (US, 2) bt R McQuillan (Aus) 6-0, 6-2; **J NOVOTNA** (Cz, 3) bt W Probst (Ger) 6-4, 4-6, 6-0.

Order of play

CENTRE COURT (12.0): M Hingis (Switz) v O Barabanschikova (Bela); T Henman (GB) v J Golmard (Fr); P Sampras (US) v H Dreekman (Ger); A Frazier (US) v B Schultz-McCarthy (Neth).

COURT ONE (12.0): G Rusedski (GB) v J Stark (US); A Kournikova (Rus) v B Rittner (Ger); T Johansson (Swe) v B Becker (Ger); M Rosset (Switz) v P Korda (Cz).

General results

Soccer

WORLD CUP QUALIFYING: Asian Zone: Group Four: Oman 2, Macao 0; Japan 3, Nepal 0. **Standings:** 1, Japan (P6, Pts15); 2, Oman (5–12); 3, Nepal (5–1); 4, Macao (5–1).

WORLD YOUTH C'SHIP (Malaysia): **Second round:** Brazil 10, Belgium 0; Uruguay 3, United States 0; France 1, Mexico 0; Ireland 2 (Fenn, *Duff). Morocco 1 (Worrall og) (aet; 1–1 at 90min; *=golden goal).

Rugby Union

TOUR MATCH: Gauteng Falcons 39, Scotland 35.

Rugby League

STATE OF ORIGIN: Queensland 18, New South Wales 12. New South Wales win series 2–1.

Golf

EUROPEAN AMATEUR TEAM C'SHIP (Portmarnock): **Selected: First qualifying round:** 375 Ireland (70 K Nolan, 75 P Lawrie, 76 R Coughlan, N Fox, 78 G McGimpsey. Discounted 85 J Fannigan). 380 Scotland (74 S Young, 75 A Forsyth, 76 C Watson, 77 B Howard, 78 M Brooks. Discounted 80 J Ranking). 387 England (78 S Webster, 78 R Wiggins, 79 M Carver, 81 M Blackey, 81 J Rose. Discounted 84 G Wolstenholme). 400 Wales (76 N Edwards, 79 J Donaldson, D Park, 80 M Pilkington, 84 M Smith. Discounted 85 Y Taylor)

Cricket

SECOND TEST (Kingstown, St Vincent): West Indies 147 (C Hooper 81; Pushpakumara 5–41) and 343 (B Lara 113; Muralitharan 5–113). Sri Lanka 222 (S Jayasuriya 80; Hooper 5–26) and 233–8 (A de Silva 78, A Ranatunga 72no, Walsh 4–73). Match drawn. **First Test: Antigua:** West Indies won by six wickets

THREE-DAY MATCH: The Parks: British Universities v Australians. No play rain. Today: 11.0.

SECOND XI CHAMPIONSHIP (11.0): **Shirehampton:** Gloucestershire 148–8 (D R Hewson 66; Brown 5–27) v Northamptonshire. No play, rain: **Collingham:** Nottinghamshire v Yorkshire. **Kibworth:** Leicestershire v Hampshire. **North Perrott:** Somerset v Lancashire. **Sittingbourne:** Kent v Worcestershire.

Baseball

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Cleveland 10, Minnesota 5; Detroit 8, New York 12; Toronto 6, Boston 9; Chicago 4, Kansas City 0; Milwaukee 2, Baltimore 6; Texas 6, Anaheim 7; Seattle 1, Oakland 4.

NATIONAL LEAGUE: San Francisco 4, San Diego 1; Montreal 6, Cincinnati 7 (10inns); Philadelphia 1, Florida 4; New York 6, Atlanta 5; Houston 3, Pittsburgh 8; St Louis 7, Chicago 2; Los Angeles 2, Colorado 6.

Cycling

TOUR OF SWITZERLAND: Ninth stage (Wetzikon to Davos; 195.9km): 1, O Camenzind (Switz) 5hr 17min 22sec; 2, J Ullrich (Ger) at 1min 5sec; 3, L Piepoli (It) same time; 4, F Garcia Casas (Sp) 1.14; 5, S Garzelli (It) 2.06; 6, D Nelissen (Neth); 7, F Casagrande (It); 8, S Gontschar (Ukr); 9, J Jaksche (Ger); 10, B Zberg (Switz) all st. **Overall standings:** 1, C Agnolutto (Fr) 33hr 38min 02sec; 2, O Camenzind (Switz) at 2min 08sec; 3, J Ullrich (Ger) 4.20; 4, D Alkorta Extebarria (Sp) 5.32; 5, R Meier (Switz) 6.18; 6, F Garcia Casas (Sp) 6.22; 7, D Nardello (It) 6.48; 8, S Garzelli (It) 7.17; 9, P Buechor (Switz) 7.28; 10, L Piepoli (It) 7.55.

Hockey

U-21 INTERNATIONAL (Milton Keynes): England 1, Australia 3.

Evening Racing

CHESTER

6.50 (1m 2f 75yds): 1, **BREAK THE RULES**, K Darley (2–5 Fav); 2, **Nicola's Princess** (16–1); 3, **Whittle Rock** (9–2). 6 ran. 7, 3½. (M Pipe) Tote: £1.40; £1.30, £2.60. Dual F: £5.50. CSF: £7.63.

7.20 (1m 4f 66yds): 1, **KATHRYN'S PET**, A Culhane (5–2 Fav); 2, **Manazil** (11–1); 3, **Rumpel** (7–1). 8 ran. 1½, 3. (Mrs M Reveley) Tote: £2.60; £1.40, £4.80. Dual F: £17.70. CSF: £26.69

7.50 (6f 18yds): 1, **CHARLIE SILLETT**, J D Smith (5–1). 2, **Westcourt Magic** (20–1); 3, **Gadge** (5–1). 15–8 Fav Selhurstpark Flyer. 12 ran. 1½, 1½. (B Hills) Tote: £6.30; £1.40, £7.30, £2.10. Dual F: £78.00. Trio: £306.80. CSF: £115.24. Tricast: £605.71.

EPSOM

6.40 (7f): 1, **CALCHAS**, S Sanders (Evens Fav); 2, **Indian Missile** (100–30); 3, **Overture** (3–1). 5 ran. 5, 3. (Sir Mark Prescott) Tote: £2.30; £1.10, £2.40. Dual F: £3.10. CSF: £4.30.

7.10 (7f): 1, **PURCHASING POWER**, Pat Eddery (7–2 Fav); 2, **Twin Creeks** (11–1); 3, **Halowing** (20–1). 13 ran. 1½, 2½. (N Callaghan) Tote: £3.50; £2.00, £3.10, £6.90. Dual F: £17.70. Trio: £128.60. CSF: £38.05. Tricast: £533.32. NR: Impulsif.

7.40 (1m 2f 18yds): 1, **CAP JULUCA**, R Hughes (9–4); 2, **Amid Albadu** (6–4 Fav); 3, **Charlotte Corday** (15–8) 3 ran. 1½, 5. (R Charlton) Tote: £2.60. Dual F: £1.80. CSF: £5.11. NR: Arabian Story.

8.10 (1m 4f 10yds): 1, **ANCIENT QUEST**, Paul Eddery (9–2); 2, **Glow Forum** (4–1 Fav); 3, **Courageous Knight** (20–1). 9 ran. 9, 3. (N Callaghan) Tote: £7.80; £2.00, £1.80, £4.20. Dual F: £8.90. Trio: £63.50. CSF: £17.65. Tricast: £298.78. NR: At Liberty.

HAMILTON

7.00 (5f 4yds): 1, **RAGTIME COWGIRL**, N Pollard (6–1); 2, **Stolen Kiss** (2–5 Fav); 3, **Diet** (10–1). 5 ran. 3, 2. (D Nolan) Tote: £13.20; £1.60, £1.40. Dual F: £3.20. Trio: £2.10. CSF: £9.18. NR: Another Nightmare, Aye Ready, Goretski, Impish, Kid Ory, Sunday Mail Too.

7.30 (6f 5yds): 1, **FLOWER O'CANNIE**, G Parkin (12–1); 2, **Iris May** (1–2 Fav); 3, **Frisky Lady** (7–1). 6 ran. 1½, 4. (M W Easterby) Tote: £10.80; £2.70, £1.10. Dual F: £5.80. CSF: £16.38.

8.00 (1m 1f 36yds): 1, **SCARABEN**, J Fortune (5–4 Fav); 2, **Western General** (100–30); 3, **Principal Boy** (13–8) 3 ran. Hd, ½. (S Kettlewell) Tote: £2.40. Dual F: £4.50. CSF: £4.52. NR: Mentalasanythin.

Fixtures

Soccer

WORLD YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIP (Malaysia): **Second round:** Ghana v United Arab Emirates; Spain v Canada; Australia v Japan; England v Argentina.

Cricket

BRITANNIC ASSURANCE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP (four days, 11.0): **Southend:** Essex v Derbyshire. **Swansea:** Glamorgan v Sussex. **Leicester:** Leicestershire v Warwickshire. **Luton:** Northamptonshire v Gloucestershire. **Worcester:** Worcestershire v Lancashire. **Headingley:** Yorkshire v Middlesex

AXA LIFE LEAGUE (one day, 5.0): **The Oval:** Surrey v Nottinghamshire.

Any umbrellas . . . spectators mill around the All England Club killing time during a rain-induced delay yesterday

صكرا من الاصل

Rugby Union

Evans out of tour, Bentley revving up

Stretched to breaking point . . . Ieuan Evans (left), in training yesterday with Scott Gibbs, before pulling out of the tour with a groin injury ALEX LIVESEY

Robert Armstrong in Durban

IEUAN EVANS is to miss the final three matches of the Lions tour after aggravating the groin injury he sustained at the end of the first Test victory against the Springboks in Cape Town.

The loss of the Wales wing is a heavy blow, but it opens the way for the former rugby league player John Bentley, who has been the Lions' outstanding three-quarter, to play in the final two Tests.

Evans said: "It was a bitterly disappointing way for my tour to end. When I picked up the injury it did not appear serious, but in the last few days I aggravated the problem and part of the groin is now torn.

"I will not be able to play for a month and it means my tour is over. My family has just arrived in Durban and I don't know yet if I will travel back to Wales with them next Tuesday or stay out for the remainder of the tour.

"I am very confident we will beat South Africa again on Saturday and I would like to remain part of the tour. The spirit among the players has been exceptional and we have the South Africans on the run. It is excellent to see."

Bentley, who ran in a hat-trick of tries in Tuesday's victory over Free State, is the top-scoring three-quarter on the tour and his sharp, inventive performances have contributed substantially to the Lions' excellent run of nine wins in 10 matches.

The Lions, who today are expected to name their team for the second Test here at King's Park on Saturday, have not decided whether to call up a replacement for the Leicester centre Will Greenwood, whose concussion ruled him out for a mandatory three weeks and who has been recommended to take a two-month break from rugby. There are still four centres in the reduced squad, which has the two Tests and one midweek fixture to play.

Meanwhile the Springboks have been forced to revamp their three-quarter line because of injuries to the centres Japie Mulder (shoulder) and Edrich Lubbe (hamstring) and the wing James Small (hamstring).

Western Province contribute two new caps, Percy Montgomery at centre and Peter Rossouw on the wing, in a side showing four changes, one of them positional, from the line-up that began the first Test.

Montgomery forms a new midfield partnership with Danie van Schalkwyk, who earns a recall after scoring two of the tries which helped Northern Transvaal beat the Lions. Andre Snyman switches from the right to the left wing to make way for Rossouw, who replaces Small.

Fritz van Heerden, the Western Province second-row forward who has been linked with Leicester, is drafted on to the bench in place of Krynauw Otto.

South Africa's coach Carel Du Plessis rejected suggestions that the hooker Naka Drotske should be dropped in favour of James Dalton, who is thought to have a better throw-in as well as being more dynamic around the field. He has also kept faith with the lock Hannes Strydom, notwithstanding the claims of Van Heerden, who is regarded by some critics as a more consistent ball-winner.

Asked whether South Africa would play a more forward-orientated game in the second Test, Du Plessis replied: "We don't want to play in a more conservative way but rather more to the strength of the players. For us the first Test was a game of lost opportunities; next time it will be important for us to stay focused on the goals we set ourselves."

SOUTH AFRICA: A Joubert; A Snyman, P Montgomery, D van Schalkwyk, P Rossouw; H Honiball, J van der Westhuizen; O du Randt, N Drotske, A Garvey, M Andrews, H Strydom, R Kruger, A Venter, G Teichmann (capt). **Replacements:** R Bennett, B Wessels, W Swanepoel, J Dalton, D Theron, F van Heerden.

Bath draw short straw of Brive and Pontypridd

BATH will face the holders Brive and the Welsh champions Pontypridd in next season's Heineken Cup. Yesterday's draw for the expanded competition, embracing 20 clubs and starting on September 6, also pits the Courage league champions Wasps against Swansea, Glasgow and Ulster. Leicester, runners-up to Brive, are in a pool including Toulouse.

Bath, eager to prove themselves in Europe after going out to Cardiff in the quarter-finals last year, will do well even to get that far this time. Pontypridd, where they start, beat them in a pool match last season. With five pools of four, only the top teams qualify automatically. The other three places will be determined by play-offs on November 1-2 between the five pool runners-up and the best-placed third team.

Pool matches will be home and away on six successive weekends. The finalists will receive £115,000 each.

Wales has still to decide its last two teams in the competition. Cardiff and Llanelli, who booked their places, are in dispute with the Welsh Rugby Union and have been threatened with eviction from Europe if they do not accept the terms.

Pool A: Leinster, Toulouse, Leicester, Milan.
Pool B: Swansea, Wasps, Ulster, Glasgow.
Pool C: Brive, Bath, Scottish Borders, Pontypridd.
Pool D: Munster, Harlequins, Bourgoin, Welsh representative.
Pool E: Pau, Caledonia, Treviso, Welsh representative.

Gauteng Falcons 38, Scotland XV 35

Scots not given enough Lee way

Gordon Lyle in Brakpan

DERRICK LEE scored 25 points, including two tries, from full-back but was unable to prevent Scotland suffering the second defeat of their tour in losing to Gauteng here last night.

Without a forward platform, the Scots tried to throw the ball around at pace and paid a heavy price for their high-risk strategy. They conceded four tries before putting a better reflection on the scoreline with two late touchdowns against a provincial side who included the former South African prop forward Johan Le Roux, once banned for 18 months after biting an All Black player's ear.

Scotland were not helped by some bizarre refereeing decisions, and when their captain Peter Walton asked for clarification he was told, according to the tour manager Dougie Morgan: "You can ask all you like but you are playing in South Africa under South African rules."

Besides hurt pride, Scotland were beset by injuries. The centre Cammy Murray (arm strain), prop Dave Hilton (hamstring) and second-row Andy Lucking (leg bruising) all had to go off and the squad's resources will be *stretched for tomorrow's* match with Northern Transvaal.

Lee did his best to breathe life into the Scots with his brace of tries but even he was not immune from some elementary errors which blighted the overall performance.

He also had a hand in a try by the flanker Cammy Mather, and Shaun Longstaff completed the Scottish try-scoring, *but by that stage* they were playing catch-up rugby.

The damage was done just after half-time, when Scotland's fringe defence was pierced for the second time, with the flanker Nick Broughton losing out to the Guateng hooker Jan Bosch.

Gauteng's other tries came from their full-back Jacques Blaauw, wing Len van Riet and De Wet Strydom. The winger Gert Peens kicked 18 points from three conversions and four penalties.

SCORERS: Gauteng: Tries: Bosch, Strydom, Blaauw, Van Riet. Conversions: Peens 3. Penalties: Peens 4. Scotland: Tries: Lee 2, Longstaff, Mather. Conversions: Lee 3. Penalties: Lee 3.

GAUTENG: J Blaauw; G Peens, M Masina, E Meyer, L van Riet; P Hoffman, N Campbell-McGeachy; I Hattingh (capt), J Bosch, J Le Roux, W Lock, D van der Riet, J Senekal, N Pickford, D Strydom.

SCOTLAND: D Lee (London Scottish); A Stanger, C Murray (both Hawick, C Joiner, Leicester, 61min), J Mayer (Watsonians), S Longstaff (Dundee HSFP); S Nichol (Melrose), G Burns (Watsonians); D Hilton (Bath, G Graham, Newcastle, 67), S Brotherstone (Melrose), B Stewart (Edinburgh Acad), S Murray (Bedford), A Lucking (Currie, S Campbell, Melrose, 66), C Mather (Watsonians), P Walton (capt, Newcastle), N Broughton (Melrose).
Referee: M Lawrence (South Africa).

Soccer

Blades chairman savages Kendall

Michael Walker

EVERTON's circuitous attempt to install a manager took yet another twist yesterday when the Sheffield United chairman Mike McDonald said he wanted £1 million compensation for losing Howard Kendall *with 18 months of his* contract remaining.

In a bitter statement McDonald also said: "I feel I have been kicked in the teeth by Kendall. Last week, when the first approach came, I gave Howard 48 hours to sort it out. He wanted an extra day but I told him I had to have an answer by 10pm that night, and on the dot he called me to say he was staying.

"I brought him back into football when no one apparently would give him a job. Now he has let me down."

McDonald, who will negotiate with Everton's chairman Peter Johnson, asked: "How do you put a figure on experience, know-how and a success rate?" However, he is confident of replacing Kendall soon. "When I move, I move quickly," he said.

John Toshack has become coach at Besiktas, signing a two-year contract with the Istanbul club. Jupp Heynckes, the former German interna*tional, has been installed as* Real Madrid's coach in a two-year deal worth £2.6 million.

And Walsall have appointed the former Denmark captain Jan Sorensen as manager; he has been out of football for about eight years and succeeds Chris Nicholl.

Cambridge's winger Paul Raynor, 31, is to join a Cantonese club. He has agreed a one-year deal with Guang Deong Wen Yuan, who will pay a fee *of about £20,000.*

Internazionale have dismissed Barcelona claims that Ronaldo's £18 million transfer to the Italian club broke Fifa regulations. "The transfer is absolutely legitimate and the contract has been already deposited at the Italian federation," said a lawyer acting for Inter.

Kendall . . . 'let United down'

Athletics

Christie confirms exit as Bailey rules again

Duncan Mackay in Paris

DONOVAN BAILEY again underlined his claim to be the world's fastest man at the Meeting Gaz de France in the Stade Charlety here on the day Linford Christie ended all speculation as to whether he will *change his mind about* retiring.

The Canadian Olympic 100 metres champion raced to an easy victory in 10.07 seconds over two of the three Americans he will have to face when he defends his world title in Athens in August.

But Christie's decision to miss the British trials in Birmingham next month to race in Germany means he has ruled himself out of the reckoning. Athletes who want to be considered for Athens must compete in the trials. "It is hoped this clarifies Linford's decision to end his international career at the European Cup," said his agent Sue Barrett.

Christie's outstanding performance in Germany last weekend, where he completed his fourth consecutive sprint double and led Britain to only their second European Cup triumph in 32 years, had led to suggestions he should once again delay his decision to *call it a day on his interna*tional career. But, as Christie said himself in Munich: "Donovan beat me easily in Nuremburg, so what's the point of going?"

Christie meets Bailey in Sheffield on Sunday over 150 metres with the winner receiving $50,000 (£31,000). Bailey, cock-a-hoop after his victory earlier this month in his $2 million challenge against Michael Johnson, was *again in outstanding form on* a night so cold and wet that many of the crowd wore overcoats and gloves.

Even a false start failed to disturb his concentration. He seemed to find an extra gear in the second half of the race to pull effortlessly away from Maurice Greene and Tim Montgomery, first and second respectively in the US trials, and Leroy Burrell, the man he succeeded as world record holder.

When Bailey reaches full speed his head bobs and his stride appears to be careering out of control. But his world record of 9.84sec, set in Atlanta, appears to be under threat when he gets the sun on his back and is really put under pressure. Montgomery was his closest challenger here, 0.05sec behind. "I'll run faster than ever this year," Bailey said.

Johnson, meanwhile, is set to be offered a wild card entry into the world championships *after the injury he sustained* during his race against Bailey forced him out of the US trials in which a strict first-three-past-the-post qualifying system operates.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation will announce within the next two weeks that all defending champions from Gothenburg will be given automatic entry into Athens. Others to benefit will include Gwen Torrence *(100m), Dan O'Brien (decath*lon) and John Godina (shot), who all either failed to qualify or were injured.

"At this point I am not running in the world championships," Johnson said. "Unless we get a call from them saying they want me to run, and if my coach thinks it is a good idea to do that, then we'll decide what event. But at this point I am not part of the US team."

Sonia O'Sullivan, reduced to a shadow of her best in Atlanta last year because of a stomach complaint, discovered she has still a lot of work to do if she is successfully to defend her world 5,000m title.

The Irishwoman was left struggling in fourth place in the 3,000m, nearly the length of the straight behind Romania's Gabriela Szabo. The tiny Transylvanian, who was comprehensively beaten into second place by Britain's Kelly Holmes in the European Cup 1500m in Munich last *weekend, put the bite on a* strong field to win in 8:40.44 with O'Sullivan 13sec behind.

Rugby League

And now Manly may return

Paul Fitzpatrick

HOPES of a return to only one game in Australia next season rose with yesterday's publication of a charter for unification by the Australian Rugby League, which has been in competition with Rupert Murdoch's Super League.

The ARL has set out a specific timetable and believes that, with compromise on both sides, reunification can be achieved for the start of *the 1998 season.* But some clubs may face mergers and, if the English experience is anything to go by, that may be a painful experience.

The return of such outstanding clubs as Manly, Sydney City and Parramatta would make the Australian game even more powerful and would provide an awesome pool of players for the national side. But there might also be benefits for European clubs, who have taken such a battering in the World Club Championship; a reduction in the number of clubs, currently 22 split between the ARL and Super League, would mean a lot of talented Australian players looking for work.

Overseas players have been blamed for the poor showing of British clubs in the championship, but Gary Hetherington, the Leeds chief executive, said yesterday that they had enriched the game here. Problems arose, he said, when First and Second Division clubs signed as many as half a dozen overseas players.

The enduring popularity of the game in Australia, notwithstanding its problems, was demonstrated again yesterday when more than 33,000 watched the third State of Origin game in Sydney, a dead match.

Queensland, who lost the first two games, won this time, 18-12, through tries from Ben Ikin, Matt Coyne and Julian O'Neill. Jamie Ainscough and Andrew Johns scored New South Wales's tries.

Martin Hall, Wigan's Welsh international hooker, is likely to miss the start of his club's second phase of the World Club Championship. He needs surgery to mend the thumb he broke against Canberra Raiders last weekend.

Hockey

England juniors better but beaten again

Pat Rowley

ENGLAND'S Under-21 team proved fast learners yesterday when, after Monday's 6-0 defeat by their Australian counterparts, their 3-1 loss at Milton Keynes was delayed until the dying minutes.

England's juniors in fact threatened to steal a victory that what would have been a travesty *by holding* the lead for almost 20 minutes.

That Australia took so long to score was due in equal measure to their poor finishing and the brilliant saves of the goalkeepers Nick Taylor and Jon Ebsworth, a second-half replacement.

Under heavy pressure, England had only one shot in the first half but took the lead in the 40th minute from their third corner, David Mathews finding the roof of the net with a powerful flick.

But with Australia's Olympic forward Baeden Choppy in outstanding form, the inevitable equaliser came from his stick with a direct corner shot that somehow eluded Ebsworth's pads.

Seven minutes later, after England's Mark Pearn had almost profited from a one-on-one position, Australia released Guy Bolton to chip Ebsworth cleverly and put his side ahead.

Within a minute Choppy wrapped it up as he sped through the tiring England defence and scored *with a* stinging reverse hit.

Cricket

Piper suspended after drug test

Paul Weaver

KEITH PIPER, the 27-year-old Warwickshire and England A wicketkeeper, has been fined £500 and suspended from today's Championship match at Leicester for bringing the game into disrepute by smoking cannabis.

Warwickshire said: "Both the England and Wales Cricket Board and the club take a serious view of the offence, believing it is essential for the clean image of the game to be protected. The player has agreed to give the club a signed undertaking that he will not use the drug in future. The club has also offered to provide counselling to the player."

The Warwickshire players were tested for drugs on Monday after a recent Sunday newspaper article in which the bowler Paul Smith, who joined Shropshire this season, confessed to taking cocaine during his time at Edgbaston and claimed drugs were rife in top-level sport. The ECB has since banned Smith from professional cricket for 22 months.

Cannabis is not on the ECB's list of banned substances because, unlike cocaine, it is not viewed as performance-enhancing. In May 1986 Ian Botham was suspended for two months for admitting he had smoked it.

Meanwhile, Surrey are likely to lose £100,000 if the AXA *Life* League game against Nottinghamshire, scheduled for 5pm today at The Oval, falls foul of the weather. It would be the first official floodlit match in England.

● The draw between West Indies and Sri Lanka in Kingstown, St Vincent means England go ahead of Sri Lanka in the Wisden World Championship, the unofficial international ranking system.

		P	Pts	Diff
1	Australia	14	22	+8
2	West Indies	13	18	+5
3	South Africa	12	16	+4
4	India	14	17	+3
5	Pakistan	12	13	+1
6	England	14	11	-3
7	Sri Lanka	15	11	-4
8	*Zimbabwe*	10	*4*	-6
9	New Zealand	16	8	-8

Piper . . . smoked cannabis

Australia feel the drip-drip effect of an English summer

Greg Baum in Oxford sees another day lost on a tour half done yet hardly begun

THE one-time Australia all-rounder Tony Dodemaide, who played many seasons of English league cricket and two for Sussex, learned to weather the weather. "Some days you win, some days you lose," he would say. "And some days it rains."

Most days of Australia's tour it rains. It did in Birmingham for the first Test, but not hard or long enough to save Australia from defeat. It did in the next matches against Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire, so much that only 18 of 39 scheduled hours were possible.

And it did at Lord's, reducing the second Test to a sum of two days' play and thwarting Australia's attempt to square the series. As David Shepherd and Srinivas Venkat walked out side by side one night to make yet another inspection, they might have been going to join the queue for Noah's Ark.

It rained again in Oxford yesterday, washing out the first day of the tourists' match against British Universities, imperilling the second and further marginalising a match that is anyway an anachronism.

Rain is the natural enemy of cricket and on this tour it is making a particular prey of Australia. It has several dampening effects. It lengthens the days but shortens an already shorter-than-usual tour. By the first day of the third Test at Old Trafford Australia will be halfway through their tour, which is disconcerting since there is still a sense of it not having begun.

Australia have yet to win a Test match, or any full-scale match, and neither Waugh has made a Test half-century. The weather has exaggerated poor form, jeopardised good and complicated selection. For the third Test Australia will have to choose between Jason Gillespie, fit again after injury, and Mike Kasprowicz, perhaps without the benefit of comparing them in a match. They will also have to trust their instincts about Michael Bevan.

This has fragmented the squad. Yesterday afternoon some went to an indoor training session, some played golf, some lounged by the pool and some slept. It was good for the players to be able to relax, said one *official without convincing* even himself.

It has made the players restless. Adam Gilchrist, the reserve wicketkeeper thought by many to be a Test-class batsman, has had 14 minutes of match batting in 31 days. At Lord's he did not even take his bat out of his bag. Ricky Ponting, who would be next batsman picked in the event of injury or loss of form, has had two innings in 40 days.

It has put the players more often than they would have liked in the hands of Steve Smith, a diminutive former navy diver who is their fitness trainer and whom some have come to regard as more menacing opposition than anything on the field. He drilled them for an hour in a gym yesterday morning, reawakening in one senior player a sentiment he first felt during a similar session at Lord's four weeks ago. "I was born in the wrong era," he gasped.

Perhaps the only man who can feel satisfaction is the physiotherapist Errol Alcott, who for the first time on tour is not treating a major injury. Even he has a complaint, that his treatment room is forever crowded with players with phantom ailments and nothing better to do. "I'm glad they don't have any *stresses for once,"* he said. "But I do."

The question marks over Tyson, page 13
Wilkinson back in Davis Cup team, page 14
Lions tour ends for injured Evans, page 15
Blades demand £1m to release Kendall, page 15

SportsGuardian

Wimbledon suffers in the gloom

Rain fails to derail the Seles express

Stephen Bierley sees the No. 2 seed trample over Australia's Rachel McQuillan

THE weather forecast for today is hardly encouraging but Wimbledon will be hoping to play catch-up and haul itself back on track for a finish a week this Sunday.

Alan Mills, the tournament referee, is not a man given to emotional outbursts, having been schooled in many summers of less than stunning British weather. As the rain steepled down out of pewter skies he announced that Wimbledon "could stand a couple of days" of this weather.

There seemed, by mid-afternoon, little prospect of any play whatsoever, with the London Weather Centre passing the word that it was unable to be precise about when the rain might cease. Precise? When have our forecasters ever been precise?

British phlegm was everywhere. People ate, drank, read, played cards — and tried not to imagine that the most awful of prospects might come to pass: Cliff Richard taking the microphone.

Patience was eventually rewarded for the privileged few on Centre Court and the new No. 1 Court when, a little after 6pm, play started.

Monica Seles, the No. 2 seed, who had been due on court against Australia's Rachel McQuillan on Monday, was clearly in no mood to hang about any longer once her first-round match got under way.

There are many who believe that this might be the adopted American's year to win a title that has so far eluded her.

After losing the final here to Steffi Graf five years ago, and after being stabbed in Germany in 1993, she did not return to Wimbledon until last year, when she was far from fit and went out in the second round. This year she has not won a title but displayed much-improved form in the French Open, where she was beaten in the semi-finals by Martina Hingis.

But her father and coach, Karoll, is seriously ill with cancer, and Seles, who seems to have had an unending struggle with her emotions over the past four years, remains mentally fragile.

She was almost in tears after her victory yesterday. "I'm trying to talk to my dad a couple of times every day. I'm going through a tough time, but I just have to go through with it. What's going on in my life is much bigger than tennis."

But there was nothing delicate about her play yesterday, with McQuillan barely able to win a point in a first set which rushed past her as quickly as the clouds scudded across the murky skies.

The Australian's nervousness was highlighted by her inability to throw the ball up twice in the same place when serving. Consequently her serve resolutely refused to function and Seles took an aggressive toll of numerous balls that sat up and begged to be thumped.

The first set was over in 18 minutes, being totally missed by several on Centre Court who had sponsored themselves to sleep. Many were awoken mid-way through the second set by the huge cheer that greeted McQuillan's winning her first game.

At last it appeared a match would finish but with Seles on match point the rain again began to fall. The Australian, no doubt hoping for another day and another start on centre stage, crisply dispatched a volley to thwart Seles, and the dreaded words "play is suspended" immediately rang out.

On all the outside courts, where play had barely begun, the day was all but over. But those on Centre never gave up hope and 40 minutes later Seles was back and in about two minutes had wrapped it up by 6-0, 6-2.

A little later Jana Novotna, the No. 3 seed, completed a 6-4, 4-6, 6-0 win over Wiltrud Probst of Germany on No. 1 Court.

Today play starts on the show courts at noon, with Greg Rusedski first on Court No. 1 against Jonathan Stark, and Tim Henman second up on Centre Court against France's Jerome Golmard. Weather permitting.

Supercharged Seles . . . the second seed took only 18 minutes to win the first set in her impressive opening victory yesterday PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

How the rain could put Wimbledon two days behind schedule

If the bad weather continues at Wimbledon, the referee will have to decide to play this Sunday or to extend the tournament into a third week. The forecast is not good for the next two days, and if much play is lost the tournament could be 183 matches behind schedule by the end of the week. The last year in which there was play on the middle Sunday was 1991 when only 52 matches had been completed by the end of the fourth day.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Matches scheduled to be completed	69	155	226	298	368	440
Matches actually completed/ likely to be completed	16	92	94	134	169	[illegible]
Number of matches behind schedule	53	63	132	164	199	[illegible]

FORECAST

Frank Keating

Always much better to change a winning team

FOR rugby's second Test it is hoped that Fran Cotton and his Lions selectors will be more radically enlightened than cricket's David Graveney and Co were for England at Lord's.

"Never change a winning team" is the dictum and it is bunkum, as Mark Taylor illustrated at Lord's by binning the other hoary old saw, "On winning the toss, think about putting them in, then always bat".

Inspiring enough as the Lions victory ultimately was in Cape Town, from this distance and by satellite/ricochet it seemed to be achieved by a highly disciplined rearguard action and not by the positive offensive the Lions had promised. No British Isles supporter in his right mind can expect the Springboks to miss out so gormlessly again, present penalties on silver platters, or take the field with no Plan B.

Three years ago this month Jack Rowell's first England side slaughtered South Africa at their very shrine in Pretoria by dint of discipline and the Neil Jenkins-like aim of Rob Andrew's trusty right instep. Rowell said no changes; and seven days later the atoning Springboks laid England to waste in totally different circumstances in Cape Town.

Bill Shankly's credo was only to make changes when the team was winning; as long as it produced a better team. It is called fine tuning.

A pound to a penny, the Lions will not win at Durban if they look to the same strategies that carried them through last week, although I agree the weather was a factor. Some different personnel for Durban would not only strengthen the side but keep the Springboks second-guessing, which is crucial.

For a start, will the Lions bite the bullet over the fly-half Gregor Townsend? I doubt whether they can admit that their perceived favourite son still seems fretfully shot up after his, and Scotland's, sorry winter. The Lions must field players whom the South Africans don't want to see; and the hosts will be pleased to prey on Townsend's nerves again.

The Springboks hate to see Jenkins lining up kicks, but he offers little as a counter-attacker at No. 15. Should he move to fly-half, and entrust the callow Tim Stimpson to add dimensions and angles from the rear? Or is it time for Mike Catt to prove he's good as he thinks he is one way or the other? Anyway, it must be time to let the form-horse John Bentley out of the starting stalls.

Tim Rodber and his flankers played an heroic back-foot English game. Durban is likely to be something else altogether, so step forward Neil Back and Eric Miller. If Miller was the more vibrant No. 8 last Thursday before he went down with flu, then he surely still is.

These cheeky abroad thoughts from home are inspired by the cricket selectors' dumb show last week. They did not even meet before Lord's, so enchanted were they with Edgbaston, and they picked the team en bloc.

Far more than rugby, cricket is a matter of courses and horses. They knew the relaid Lord's surface might be dodgy when weather was about, and surely Graveney was in touch with the Met Office. Wasn't he?

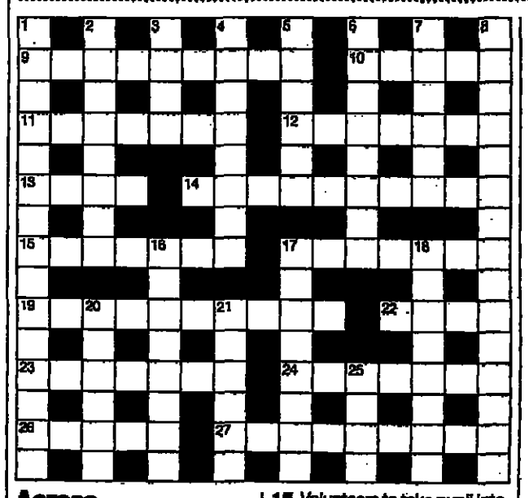
SO WHAT on earth was the point of giving Mike Atherton five bowlers when, to all intents, he used only three of them. The poor put-upon pacer Devon Malcolm was given only seven overs, and the alleged all-rounder Mark Ealham seven fewer than that. Horses for courses? So why was Ealham picked?

As well choose another bat; Chris Adams of Derbyshire looks up for it. Or Phil Tufnell, who knows the pitch inside-out. Or, come to that — and a good call too — Angus Fraser: he wouldn't have been given only seven overs; in 20 he might have readily done what Glenn McGrath did. Or Mike Smith of Gloucestershire, whose left-armers and the slope might well have found a nasty conjunction.

A quarter of a century ago, as a sub-editor on these pages, I put no end of Test match prelims by John Arlott "to bed". Before any forecasting, his second sentence was invariably "The toss will be decisive". As it was at Lord's last week. But so, before it, were England's lazy selections. Always change a winning team.

Guardian Crossword No 20,100

Set by Fawley

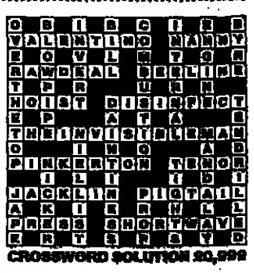


Across

9 Game for 27 in Paris? (5-2-2)
10 Surviving with a bad back (5)
11 Bistro cooked new fruit (7)
12 Was successful, or gave the impression (4,3)
13 In Rome, 16 falls to finish manufacturing building (4)
14 Established VIP — shrewd man on the board (10)
15 Volunteers to take pupil into town, by implication (7)
17 It's monstrous — make some angry phone-calls (7)
19 Egg-layer with woefully poor vision almost smothering last in nest (10)
22 Start from Athens, giving 16 some weight (4)
23 Loyal supporter won't keep quiet — one of the workers (7)
24 Story of German backing Fitzgerald? (7)
26 Fruit fool? (5)
27,16 This solution may need looking up (6-3,8)

Down

1 How one reacts, devastated about European proposal to join forces? (15)
2 A boil can burst, given type of steroid (8)
3 A little bird behaving busily (2,2)
4 Swimmer has dodgy ring — stick around (8)
5 Grab a few notes (6)
6 Previously, aged 27 (8)
7 Mockers of 22 shortly start to imply nonsense (6)
8 Blocking everyone else's view? (4-11)
16 See 27
17 Kept indoors, 15ed by newspaper's leader (8)
18 Refrain from listening, and threaten family's property (8)
20 Close friend gives up playing before it's too late (2,4)
21 Naturally, appearing in hostelry, had a meal (6)
25 Give one's verdict on the party (4)



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